The man who watches the stars. PAGE 2
Total DNAP distributions exceed projection. PAGE 3

Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XXIX, Issue No. 11

www.saipantribune.com | THURSDAY JANUARY 17, 2019 | www.facebook.com/saipantribune

75¢

82 pct. of Saipan now energized

» Power restored to 63 pct. of Tinian

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Camacho

Nearly three months after Super Typhoon Yutu brought the island's power grid to its knees, the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. announced that they have successfully restored power to 11,163 customers representing 82 percent of its overall customer base on Saipan.

See SAIPAN on Page 4

Salary bill finally signed into law

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The annual compensation of all 29 members of the 21st CNMI Legislature is secured at $32,000 after Gov. Ralph DLG Torres finally signed into law the salary bill that was passed by the House of Representatives and the Senate in the previous Legislature. All bills passed in the 20th Legislature can still become a law if it was already transmitted to the Governor's Office.

According to Article II Section 7

See SALARY on Page 4

Hunter: No indication food stamps affected by federal shutdown

By ERWIN ENCINARES
erwin_encinares@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The CNMI Nutritional Assistance Program is likely to remain unaffected by the partial federal government shutdown currently plaguing the U.S. mainland, according to Department of Community and Cultural Affairs Secretary Robert Hunter.

See HUNTER on Page 4

Guam Catholic Church enters bankruptcy amid sex abuse claims

HAGATNA, Guam (AP)—Guam's Catholic Church filed for bankruptcy Wednesday, a move that will allow the archdiocese to avoid trial in dozens of child sexual abuse lawsuits and enter settlement negotiations.

Ford Elsaesser, an attorney representing the church, said the Chapter 11 bankruptcy petition was filed with federal court in Guam. The church faces multimillion-dollar lawsuits for

See GUAM on Page 4

AP

In this photo provided by Grace Garces Bordallo, attorney Ford Elsaesser, of Elsaesser Anderson, Chtd., left, and Tony Diaz, communications director for the Archdiocese of Agana, address members of the news media at the Chancery office in Hagatna, Guam, Wednesday, Jan. 16, 2019. Guam's Catholic Church filed for bankruptcy Wednesday, a move that will allow the archdiocese to avoid trial in dozens of child sexual abuse lawsuits and enter settlement negotiations.

CHAMBER VISION
Members of the Saipan Chamber of Commerce discuss in separate groups the vision of each of the committees for the year in yesterday's meeting at the Charley's Cabaret at the Pacific Islands Club Saipan.

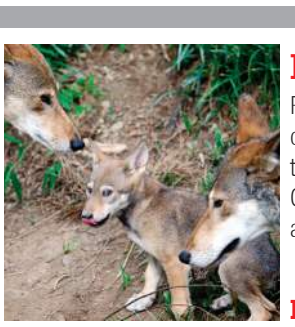
JON PEREZ

See story on Page 4

INSIDE

BUSINESS
The overwhelming rejection of Prime Minister Theresa May's Brexit deal has triggered a no-confidence vote that could topple her government.

PAGE 16



ENVIRONMENT
Researchers say a pack of wild canines found frolicking near the beaches of the Texas Gulf Coast carries a substantial amount of red wolf genes.

PAGE 19

LIFE & STYLE
President Donald Trump's offer of greasy burgers and fries to the college football champion Clemson Tigers brought a roasting from late-night TV hosts.

PAGE 21

SCAN ME WITH A COMPATIBLE QR READER TO KEEP UPDATED ON ALL THE LATEST NEWS.

GOT A NEWS TIP? TEL: 235-6397 / 235-2440 FAX: 235-3740 EMAIL: editor@saipantribune.com

Local

The man who watches the stars

By BEA CABRERA
beacabrerasaipan@gmail.com
CORRESPONDENT

Retired astronomer Norman Butler has made Guam and Saipan his home since 2011. His love for astronomy dates back from his childhood and by pursuing this passion, this led him to Guam in the 1960s working as an optical man in the U.S. Navy. Since then the skies above the islands has mesmerized him.

"I have spent equal amounts of time living on both Saipan and Guam…retired here for good… the islands are a haven for astronomers. Saipan for example has some of the most fantastic sea level clear skies on the entire planet especially for observing the heavens," he said.

"It would be hard to beat the beautiful night skies of Saipan for amateur astronomy anywhere. In fact, the Milky Way was the cover photo on a very popular astronomy magazine called *Astronomy Technology Today* published on Sept. 29, 2009… with the Palms Resort Hotel (now Kensington Hotel) on Saipan with the Milky Way rising behind it," he added.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Retired astronomer Norman Butler while at work observing the sun shining on Saipan.

Butler, a graduate of San Diego City College, holds advanced degrees in physics and astronomy including a Ph.D and this catapulted him to lead a colorful career in the field of astronomy.

"Aside from serving in the U.S. Navy as an optical man on submarine tenders repairing submarine periscopes and optical navigational equipment throughout the 1960s, I did galactic core measurement studies (M-87), chasing the space shuttle, satellite tracking, atmospheric scintillation, and meteor trail studies for AVCO Everett Research Laboratory at the Haleakala AMOS Observatory, a U.S. Air Force research laboratory located in Maui starting in the early '80s," he said.

"I was also involved building electro-optical equipment for use on both 1.6M and dual 1.2M telescopes… After a career in electro-optical engineering, I became an educator at Shenzhen Polytechnic College and later at Harbin Institute of Technology Shenzhen Graduate School both in China. Now retired and living on Saipan, I enjoy writing popular books on binoscopes as well as searching for comets, asteroids, as well as other mysterious cosmic interlopers (UFOs) with my trusty binoscope under the beautiful dark tropical skies of Saipan and Guam," he added.

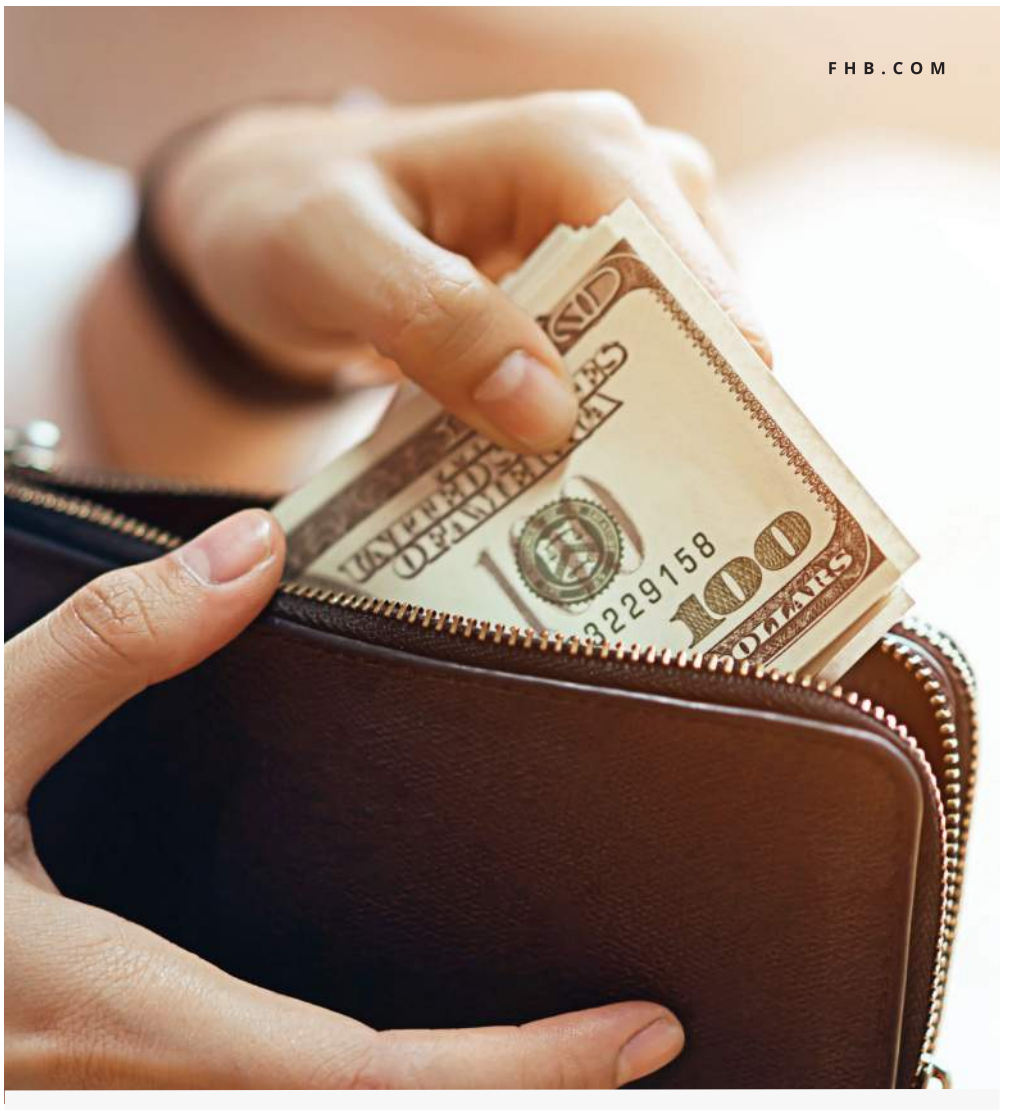
Butler is an award-winning binoscope maker. Binoscopes are like huge binoculars that will give you a brighter picture of heavenly bodies because of the combined two sides. "Imagine the night sky to be filled with beautiful points of light, almost like sparkling diamonds when they look through the two eyepieces of a binoscope...I have also authored popular books on binoscopes and binocular telescopes," he said.

"My future plan is to write a picture book of Saipan, some of its history, historical and picturesque views of Saipan, and also include some beautiful photos of the Milky Way to show how beautiful the night sky is in the Northern Mariana Islands," he added.

Butler would like to see the young generation take an interest in astronomy because of the endless possibilities out there "A young kid who is interested in astronomy should try and learn about the moon—its phases and some of the names of the big craters on the lunar surface and planets… I advise parents to get their child a book about the night sky so they can learn the constellations by name, their shape in the night sky, and the names of some of the bright stars like Sirius and galaxies such as Andromeda for example," he said.

"Also, to have them try and learn a little about telescopes to get them excited about astronomy… once a young boy or girl gets excited about astronomy at an early age, they'll really enjoy learning about the heavens even more in school, college, or a university. Then maybe even a possible career in astronomy someday working at big observatory in Hawaii. Anything is possible if you start early to plan your future," he added

Butler's books *Building and Using Binoscopes*, *History of Binoscope*, and *Building Binoscopes* are available at Amazon.com.



Get $300 as your first perk with Priority Banking.SM

Open or upgrade to a Priority Banking Checking account with $30,000 from another institution and receive $300.*

First Hawaiian Bank
IT ALL STARTS WITH YES

Gualo Rai Branch, Gualo Rai Commercial Center, Middle Road • Tel: (670) 235-3090 Fax (670) 235-3094
Oleai Branch, Oleai Center, Beach Road Chalan Laulau • Tel: (670) 234-6559 Fax: (670) 236-8936

Member FDIC

* Priority Banking: Open or upgrade to Priority Banking with a minimum opening deposit of $30,000 drawn from another financial institution, by February 28, 2019, to receive a $300 statement credit (or $150 statement credit for $15,000 minimum opening deposit drawn from another financial institution). Accounts closed or converted out of Priority Banking within 180 days will be assessed a $75 charge. The statement credit will be completed the month following the qualifications being met. As of 1/1/19, the Annual Percentage Yield (APY) for a Personal Priority Banking checking account is 0.02% for Level 2 and 0.04% for Level 3. The rates may change after the account is opening/upgraded. Limit of one statement credit per offer or account. Business and corporate accounts do not qualify for this offer. The monthly service charge is $15 for Priority Level 1, $19 for Level 2, and $22 for Level 3. Banking services and special benefits depend on the Priority Level you apply for and maintain. These benefits may be lost if account is closed or converted to another type of account. All loan-related products are subject to credit approval. Please see a Priority Banking Plan Checking Account Agreement for specific terms and conditions. These offers cannot be combined with any other discounts, offers or promotions.

Further assistance for eligible homeowners

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Eligible homeowners whose houses suffered significant damage or were totally destroyed during Super Typhoon Yutu and lack home insurance would receive two types of assistance from the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

FEMA public information officer Victor Inge told *Saipan Tribune* that they continue to lead the CNMI's recovery efforts and the ongoing partial federal government shutdown having no direct effect with their work in the Commonwealth.

"We're still actively engaged in the recovery efforts. We're one team, in one fight. We had already dispersed over $19 million in disaster grants, both for individuals and entire households. These are funds to help disaster survivors for assistance and meet their other needs," said Inge.

He said that FEMA could provide assistance to all who are eligible to avail the program in two areas: repairs and rebuild.

"We have provided assistance to disaster survivors that have significant impacts to their homes. They may be eligible for permanent construction.

"There are two areas where [FEMA] can help. The first one is for permanent repairs while the other one is for homes that are no longer feasible to be repaired," said Inge, who added that the remaining structure of totally destroyed homes would be torn down before building a new structure.

He said that they would be working in having the new homes more resilient. "Homes that would be able to withstand super typhoons like Yutu. So, next time a storm as strong like Yutu hits the CNMI, the infrastructure and homes here are more resilient."

A team of engineers from Dewberry Engineering, FEMA's contracted inspectors, will conduct the assessment of all the houses owned by those eligible to avail of assistance. "Dewberry engineers will check the house's structure, to see of what can be done."

"They will determine if the house can still be repaired or a new one, a home that is typhoon-resilient, will be built. We plan this to be a construction program here for eligible homeowners," said Inge.

In other news, the U.S. Small Business Administration had already approved a total of 1,036 home and business loans both for Typhoon Mangkhut and Yutu that totaled $62,247,000. There are 909 home loans approved for Yutu and 71 business/economic injury disaster loans while

Mangkhut had 51 and five each.

SBA Office of Disaster Assistance PIO Cynthia Cowell said their personnel would remain on Saipan until further notice. "I don't know if we will be here after much after the Jan. 27, deadline."

Total DNAP distributions exceed projection

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Saipan residents line up at the Nutritional Assistance Program office in As Lito for disaster food stamps last November.

By ERWIN ENCINARES
erwin_encinares@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Nutritional Assistance Program under the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs yesterday noted that Disaster Nutritional Assistance Program in the wake of Super Typhoon Yutu last October exceeded projections.

» 158 DNAP applications denied

"The total estimated costs for the DNAP and Supplement benefits for Super Typhoon Yutu was $8,562,834 for 15,280 households," NAP administrator Walter Macaranas told *Saipan Tribune*. He noted that the projection was based on the 2010 CNMI Census, which indicated 14,406 households on Saipan and 874 households on Tinian.

However, Macaranas reported that preliminary figures indicated 17,028 households received DNAP for both islands combined, an additional 1,748 households more than expected. He did not disclose the final figure for DNAP distributions.

"The DNAP projected issuance was $8,193,802 for an estimate of 12,409 households and $369,032 of disaster supplements for estimate of 2,871 households for Saipan and Tinian," he said, breaking down the projections for both islands.

Emergency food assistance on Tinian was operated from Nov. 15, 2018 through Nov. 21, 2018, while Saipan was from Nov. 25, 2018 through Dec. 1, 2018.

While DNAP distributions for both islands exceeded projections, Macaranas noted that 158 DNAP applications were denied due to excess income or excess resources. Specifically, 140 households on Saipan were denied and 18 were denied for Tinian.

"The funding used to disburse the DNAP and Supplemental benefits came from the FY 2018 NAP block grant carryover funds and the [Enhanced Nutritional Assistance Program] grant. In terms of the regular NAP program, operation will continue as usual," Macaranas noted.

Burning permits to be revoked

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The free burning permits issued by the Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services will be revoked this week as a result of successful Super Typhoon Yutu recovery efforts.

Norita

Nearly three months post-Super Typhoon Yutu, the CNMI is nearly back to normal and the free burning of typhoon debris will no longer be allowed.

According to DFEMS Commissioner Clyde Norita, because of the outstanding job done by both the Department of Public Works and the Saipan Mayor's Office, typhoon debris have been nearly completely cleared from the villages.

"Most of the debris have been cleaned and Public Works and the [mayor's office] has done a great job … so there is no need for it [free burning permits] anymore," he said.

Norita expects to revoke the free burning permit by Monday, Jan. 21, so those who still have debris to burn will be obligated to apply for a permit or risk citation.

This week, I will revoke the free burning permit…this week will be the last week and then you would have to start applying for a burning permit," he said.

Norita said that the information would be publicly released by next week.

"The public information will be out this week and starting next week Monday, you have to apply for burning permits," he said.

Immediately following Super Typhoon Yutu, DFEMS issued the permit that allowed anyone to burn their typhoon related debris freely without the risk of citation.

DFEMS limited the time to burn green waste to Monday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday and individuals could only burn green waste from 3pm to 5pm on weekdays and 9am to 5pm on Saturday.

Get the amazing iPhone XS.
Sign up on a 3-Service Explorer Bundle and get a FREE Roku Streaming stick.
UNITED MileagePlus
Earn United MileagePlus miles with every $1 on the Explorer Bundle.
iPhone XS
64GB
$399 $299*
store.ite.net ite_cnmi ite.cnmi
Terms and conditions apply. Offer valid from 01/07/19 to 01/31/19. Advertised pricing is available only on a 24-month agreement on the $158/month plan. Advertised speeds are "up to" speeds. Subject to credit check. See stores or visit www.ite.net for details.
EXPLORE YOUR WORLD
IT&E

Chamber to play vital role in development

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Saipan Chamber of Commerce knows its role of being the community's partner in developing and sustaining the economy of the islands, and at the same time help address the critical issues affecting the CNMI.

That's why Chamber executive director Maxine Laszlo said that she wants the people to see their group also as a problem solver. "It is not just waiting on something to happen but that we are actively engaged in solving problems that have an impact on the islands, businesses, people, and the community."

She added that she wants the Chamber to be a force that would help drive the islands' success, seeing the importance of the Chamber maintaining its close relations with the government. "Not only on the legislative side, but we also wanted to focus on other government partnerships."

"Making sure that we have and maintain good relationships with agencies like [Commonwealth] Zoning [Board], the [Department of Public Works], and other agencies that affects the businesses. We want to expand on our growth."

She added that business advancement also means helping small businesses move forward aside from new and corporate businesses. "A sustainable economic development makes sure that the community has a good working relationship with the businesses. We need to identify these industries that are coming to the islands and how they impact the rest of the community."

"We see the power of the private sector in solving problems and that is what we are trying to harness here. How, instead of waiting for our government partners, can we start solving problems and do our share."

Laszlo said focusing on workforce and education would also assist sustainable development. "How to get our students, young people, and people of different ages ready for the workforce and what support that they are going to get to be part of the workforce that could move our island forward."

The mission and vision submitted by each of the committees would then be used as the Chamber's guide for the coming years.

GUAM

From Page 1

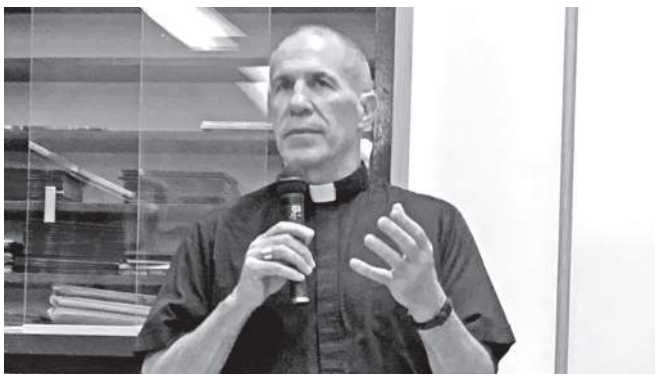
sexual abuse from about 190 accusers.

Elsaesser couldn't put a figure on the dollar amount the church is hoping to raise for its settlement. But it said its current assets are valued at $22.9 million with liabilities of $45.6 million. The church also plans to sell non-essential real estate and add the proceeds to the settlement fund.

The Chapter 11 reorganization also allows the church to continue its operations, keeping parishes and parochial schools open, Elsaesser said.

This bankruptcy filing will halt current lawsuits and create a deadline for abuse victims to file new claims before the church settles with accusers.

During the reorganization phase, a notice will be given to everyone who may have a claim but has not filed, Elsaesser said. The deadline to file is estimated to take place in May to June. An unclaimed trust fund will also be established for future claimants who did not file within the bankruptcy deadline, he said.



AP

In this photo provided by Grace Garces Bordallo, Archbishop Michael Byrnes speaks at a news conference at the Archdiocese of Agana Chancery Office in Hagatna, Guam, Wednesday, Jan. 16, 2019.

Last November, Archbishop Michael Byrnes announced the church's decision to file for bankruptcy after mediation efforts to try to settle claims failed.

"This path will bring the greatest measure of justice to the greatest number of victims," Byrnes said last year. "That's the heart of what we're doing."

Byrnes said the bankruptcy will provide finality for victim survivors.

The Chapter 11 reorganization also allows the church to continue its operations where parishes and parochial schools will remain open.

When the announcement was made in November, attorney Leander James, who is working with alleged victims in Guam, praised the move.

"We welcome the announcement," James said in a statement. "Bankruptcy provides the only realistic path to settlement of pending and future claims."

Pope Francis named a temporary administrator for Guam in 2016 after Archbishop Anthony Apuron was accused by former altar boys of sexually abusing them when he was a priest. Dozens of cases involving other priests on the island have since come to light.

Earlier last year, the Vatican removed the suspended Apuron from office and ordered him not to return to the Pacific island after convicting him of charges in a Vatican sex abuse trial.

The Vatican didn't say what exactly Apuron had been convicted of, and the sentence was far lighter than those given to high-profile elderly prelates found guilty of molesting minors.

Apuron, 73, has denied the allegations and has not been criminally charged.

SAIPAN

From Page 1

In an interview yesterday, CUC executive director Gary P. Camacho said before the storm, they had 13,555 customers.

With regards to Tinian, Camacho said as of yesterday a total of 63 percent of total customers on the island now have power.

The executive director said they anticipate to work quickly and efficiently over the next month.

Camacho said on Saipan, if the materials come in or arrive, their target is to try to energize all the customers that are capable or those would be available and ready by February.

He noted that many customers' houses or buildings are destroyed and still need repairs.

Camacho said there are a number of areas on the island that still have not been receiving power.

However, he said, CUC has 200 transformers coming in on Monday and an additional 200 more arriving on Jan. 24.

He also disclosed that they got additional equipment coming in next Monday for power's primary source and would add seven more crews on the ground.

"We're dependent on materials to finalize these restoration efforts. We still have a number of homes that obviously don't have power," he said.

"But the primary system is easily 93 percent across the island of Saipan and we need to continue that with the materials continuing to arrive," Camacho said.

He said such equipment they are eagerly waiting for are transformers, which are the connections that decrease the primary voltage low enough for use in homes.

"And those are the things that we are waiting for. And those are expected to arrive on Monday," he said.

Camacho said in the event that there is a problem with weather or anything for that matter then the public should understand that those dates could change.

"But if not, then we plan in getting them on the ground and utilizing them quickly as the crews are waiting and anticipating the arrival," he said.

Camacho said Monday is the expected arrival of the first 200 transformers and 200 more after that and continue forward to a total of approximately 800 transformers.

With respect to concrete power poles, Camacho said over 856 should be arriving this Friday from South Korea.

"They're supposed to be here on the 13th, however, due to weather issues, we were informed of the challenges in navigating through the waters from Korea to the CNMI as the result of the weather," he said.

On Tinian, Camacho said, a lot of their materials will be arriving today, Thursday, into Tinian.

"From there, they should be able to progress very quickly," he said, noting that they are adding two more heavy crews to Tinian and one light crew.

He said the equipment will be coming on Monday next week.

He said additional crews will be deployed to Tinian to help speed up restoration efforts.

He said some of the 200 transformers coming in will be brought to Tinian.

HUNTER

From Page 1

A statement from the administration Gov. Ralph DLG Torres noted that NAP benefits for February 2019 would be issued as scheduled starting Feb. 1, 2019 through Feb. 7, 2019.

"We have no indication that there [would be] issues for future funding for our NAP," Hunter said in an interview. He noted that the block grant funding granted to the CNMI's NAP and Enhanced Nutritional Assistance Program amounts to a total of about $20 million a year.

The program currently provides assistance to 3,062 households in the CNMI consisting of 8,385 eligible individuals—7,735 of which are individuals receiving assistance on Saipan, 370 on Tinian, 272 on Rota, and eight in the Northern Islands.

"We are covered at least until the end of March 2019, but we work off of a block grant," he said. "We function outside of the regular Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program," he continued. SNAP is the program other states and territories use for assistance.

Hunter yesterday noted that he believes the need for a contingency plan is unnecessary, especially since the program is funded through a block grant on an annual basis.

"I don't think we are going to go unfunded for NAP and even for SNAP—they are still giving out benefits for people," he said. Hypothetically, he said, the fall back if ever NAP goes unfunded is through local government appropriations, which he added is highly unlikely due to the significant amount.

"So far the word we received is we are fine… The communication I received is we are covered financially for NAP benefits," he said. "Especially now, when there are still a lot of people struggling," he continued, referring to the destruction Super Typhoon Yutu brought to Saipan and Tinian last October 2018.

SALARY

From Page 1

(b) of the CNMI Constitution, the governor has 20 days in considering to sign all appropriation bills while 40 days are appropriated for other legislation. A bill automatically becomes law if the governor fails to act on it—either by signing or vetoing the legislation, based on the said number of days.

House Bill 20-197, introduced by former House speaker Rafael S. Demapan in the 20th Legislature, is an act that establishes a new salary level for members of the CNMI Legislature. The House, in an emergency session, passed it last Jan. 10 and the Senate followed suit last Jan. 11. It is now Public Law 20-86.

The bill had ping-ponged from the Legislature to the Governor's Office after the measure, introduced twice by former representative Joseph P. Deleon Guerrero as H.B. 20-194 ($39,300) and H.B. 20-195 ($32,000), were consecutively vetoed by then acting governor Victor B. Hocog and Torres in a span of a month.

Hocog, when he vetoed H.B. 20-194 as the acting governor, said he made the hard decision based on the advice from the Office of the CNMI Attorney General that the Advisory Commission went against the CNMI Constitution in developing their own composite price index. He added that he accepts the $32,000 amount that was also recommended by the Commission.

The bill went back to the Legislature with Deleon Guerrero reintroducing it as H.B. 20-195 and $32,000 as the amount, which was of the commission's recommendation that went as high as $47,555.47 per annum based on the locally accepted CPI.

The bill was again passed by the bicameral body, but Torres vetoed it again after the House, according to the AG, did not meet the three-fourth number of votes needed.

This prompted Demapan to introduce H.B. 20-197 and called for an emergency session last Thursday so they could act on the legislation that was transmitted to the Senate in time for their sine die session the following day. The Senate passed the bill before they concluded.

House Speaker Blas Jonathan T. Attao (R-Saipan) and Rep. Ivan A. Blanco (R-Saipan) thanked Torres for finally signing the bill on the basis of the recommendation of Attorney General Edward Manibusan.

"I appreciate the fact that governor Torres has signed the legislation [H.B. 20-197] so that the members of the 21st Legislature are now aware as to what salary level they will be receiving," Attao told *Saipan Tribune*.

"I'm sure the advice provided by to the governor from the AG's office is sound and reflective of the previous veto messages transmitted to the Legislature. Although it clears up the salary situation for the members of the 21st Legislature, I personally believe that all the members [House and Senate] are more excited of the work ahead of us rather than the salaries that we are set to receive."

Blanco, the new House Ways and Means Committee chair, echoed Attao's sentiments. "I understand this is the AG's interpretation of the correct salary cap based on whatever the accepted CPI is. I thank governor Torres, the Salary Commission, the AG, and members and staff of the Legislature for working together to effectuate the intent of our constitution."

Mayor Atalig allowed to travel to Guam for sister's funeral

U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona granted yesterday Rota Mayor Efraim M. Atalig's request to travel to Guam to attend the funeral of his sister.

Atalig

Manglona said "upon good cause shown" she grants Atalig's unopposed motion for permission to travel to Guam.

Manglona allowed the mayor to leave this Sunday, Jan. 20, and return to Rota this Tuesday, Jan. 22.

Atalig, through counsel David G. Banes, said his sister, Bernadita Atalig Lingad, recently died and that her funeral will be this Monday, Jan. 21, in Guam.

The U.S. government did not oppose the mayor's motion.

Manglona recently granted the request of Atalig to travel to Guam last Jan. 8 to 10 to attend the 25th general assembly of the Association of Mariana Islands Mayors, Vice Mayors, and Elected Municipal Council Members (AMIM). Atalig is a member of AMIM.

The U.S. government also did not oppose the mayor's request.

Last September, a federal grand jury indicted Atalig after he allegedly arranged a government-funded trip from Rota to Guam for himself and 12 other persons, including eight municipal employees, on a false claim that he was going to check for surplus or equipment at the Naval Base in Guam. Actually, he allegedly came to participate in a partisan political rally last June 23 in Mangilao.

The indictment charged Atalig with one count of wire fraud.

The Office of the Attorney General also filed on the same day criminal charges in Superior Court against Atalig and seven other Rota municipal officials in connection with the Guam political rally.

Atalig was re-elected as Rota mayor during the last Nov. 13 election.

Last Nov. 28, the U.S. government filed a superseding indictment in federal court charging mayor Atalig and his girlfriend, Evelyn M. Atalig, with five corruption charges for allegedly arranging CNMI government-funded trips to California, Republic of Palau, Guam, and Saipan under fraudulent pretenses.

The Ataligs entered not guilty of all charges in both cases. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

DFEMS to reinforce fire lane codes anew

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services will return to the strict enforcement of fire lane codes nearly three months after Super Typhoon Yutu.

According to DFEMS Commissioner Clyde Norrita, almost all of DFEMS' personnel were assigned to assist in Super Typhoon Yutu recovery efforts and fire lane code enforcement was not the priority for the first few months post-Yutu.

"We never suspended the fire lanes…it's just that all of our people were assigned to the typhoon operations and the fire lane enforcement is done by a specific group of officers or firefighters…we had to switch our priorities and recovery and serving our people was the utmost in the typhoon recovery. But as things start to calm down, recovery is really in full motion…we got a lot of help from our DOD [Department of Defense] and our FEMA [Federal Emergency Management Agency] partners," Norrita said.

However, since recovery has been successful and the CNMI has been nearly restored to normalcy, DFEMS personnel will be reassigned to their respective duties prior to Super Typhoon Yutu and full-force fire lane enforcement is to be expected.

KIMBERLY BAUTISTA
Fire lane enforcement is expected to make a comeback as Saipan continues to recover from Super Typhoon Yutu.

"Of course, as we start to release our people from the typhoon operations, and they go back to fire operations, we expect that all those things will start to come up," he said

Norrita said that just three weeks ago, fire code investigators were released from typhoon recovery efforts and were re-assigned to their respective duties.

"Three weeks ago, we reassigned our fire code investigators back to fire so they can start to work with the companies and individual residents who are rebuilding their houses and to be in compliance and so forth," he said.

TO COVER 8-MONTH PERIOD

Judge OKs payment of $50,851 in services and expenses to Settlement Fund trustee

U.S. District Court for the NMI designated Judge Frances M. Tydingco-Gatewood last Monday approved the payment of $50,851 to the Settlement Fund's trustee for professional services and expenses incurred during the months of May to December last year.

In addition, Tydingco-Gatewood granted trustee representative Joyce C. H. Tang's petition for release of $8,106, which represents the 10-percent retainer withheld from its invoices for services rendered and expenses incurred during the months of December 2016 to March 2018.

The judge granted Tang's request as there was no objection to such invoices and the court being satisfied with the trustee's work.

The total trustee's professional services and expenses for that eight-month period in 2016 was $56,381.

The $50,851 represents 90 percent of the trustee's total $56,381 professional services and expenses.

Tydingco-Gatewood ordered the Settlement Fund to hold in trust to the credit of the trustee the sum of $5,530, which represents 10 percent of the trustee's total professional fees for that eight-month period.

The trustee may petition for release of this 10 percent retainer on a quarterly basis, subject to the court's satisfaction of the trustee's work and any objections.

Tydingco-Gatewood said she has reviewed the invoice and finds the request for compensation and reimbursement of expenses to be reasonable.

Tydingco-Gatewood expressed satisfaction with the work performed by Tang. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

How's Your Hearing?
Specializing in:
- Hearing Evaluations
- Custom fitted hearing aids
- Digital and ProgrammableTechnology
- Custom Communication Devices

Thursday, January 24th 9:00am - 4:00pm
at Marianas Medical Center in Garapan

Jennifer Ross, BC-HIS
Board Certified in Hearing Instrument Sciences
Email: rosshearingaids@yahoo.com

BOARD CERTIFIED NATIONAL BOARD FOR HEARING INSTRUMENT SCIENCES CERTIFICATION NBC HIS
Ross Hearing Aids

All interested patients should call Marianas Medical Clinic for scheduling
234-3925/7
Most Insurance Accepted

Attao: Yutu showed CNMI's weaknesses

» New House speaker wants more diversified local economy

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

House Speaker Blas Jonathan T. Attao (R-Saipan) said all elected leaders in the CNMI must work together in order to further strengthen the people's resolve as the islands continue to recover from the devastating effects brought by Super Typhoon Yutu.

The Precinct 3 lawmaker said that Yutu has brought to light that the local economy, which is dependent on tourism, is not diverse enough. "We need to give them [the people] the tools they need to succeed. We need to create policies that will help everyone, not just a select few."

"Most importantly, we need to listen. We may or may not be praised for the tough decisions that we will have to make. There is only one guarantee and that is we will face criticism as we cannot make everyone happy."

JON PEREZ

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres, right, congratulates Rep. Blas Jonathan T. Attao (R-Saipan) after the Precinct 3 lawmaker was elected as the speaker of the House of Representatives for the 21st Legislature.

Attao added that the CNMI is in an area of the world where typhoons have been a part of the people's daily lives with the Commonwealth being hit by powerful storms in the past three years—Soudelor in 2015 and late last year Mangkhut on Rota and Yutu on Saipan and Tinian.

"We must improve our infrastructure… I would like to thank the crews from Palau, Colorado, [Federated States of Micronesia], our brothers and sisters from Guam, and of course our men and women at [the Commonwealth Utilities Corp.]," said Attao.

"For all they have done to get the power and water back into our homes. I'd also like to thank all the local agencies for working with the U.S. military to distribute thousands of gallons of drinkable water from the reverse osmosis systems they set up in the weeks after Yutu."

The third term lawmaker said that the CNMI must improve its infrastructure. "I realize that a substantially better power and water system will be costly. Many will ask if we can afford to make our infrastructure stronger. I say that if we're honest, we cannot afford to not improve it."

"One way or another, I would like to address our level of preparedness for future storms, during the relative calmness of today. With that said, as we consider the 2019 fiscal year budget, we must all [study] the effects of Yutu and the storms to come."

He added that this is where the CNMI needs to diversify its economy with the Commonwealth heavily reliant on the tourism industry. "The job that the Marianas Visitors Authority does to promote the CNMI on a shoestring budget is outstanding. We can all agree that we need to do more by looking into other sustainable industries and revenue sources."

"Our CNMI budget and our debt service, how we finance our retiree pensions and supplement our [Commonwealth Healthcare Corp., Public School System, Northern Marianas College] budgets, all of it are all far too reliant on tourism and its related industries. Let's develop new industries. Let's explore viable sources of new revenues."

Attao also said that developing a local workforce would decrease the CNMI's reliance on foreign labor. "Let's explore more reasonable and practical ways to diversify our economy. It will not be an easy road, but as the late President George H.W. Bush once said, 'No problem of human making is too great to overcome by human ingenuity, human energy, and the untiring hope of the human spirit.'"

"Importantly, no problem is too great for the untiring hope for our Commonwealth. Let's continue to dream of what our future can and should be by continuing to support the work that is being done by [the Northern Marianas Trades Institute], Latte Academy, and all the folks that are working to train our people. We also need to help [the Northern Marianas College] on track."

Guam Guard Airmen continue departing for deployments

Airmen from the Guam Air National Guard's 254th Force Support Squadron (254FSS) departed over the weekend en route to a deployed location in support of Operation Inherent Resolve in Southwest Asia.

The Airmen of the 254FSS will enhance combat readiness by providing worldwide agile combat support and community services by delivering superior morale, welfare, recreation, manpower, and personnel programs services.

The Guard asks the public for their continued support as this deployment will, once again, have a significant impact on our Air Guard component. "These Airmen join other Airmen, from the 254th RED HORSE Squadron and the 254th Security Forces Squadron, who are currently deployed or supporting missions around the world. Please keep them and these Airmen in your thoughts and prayers now as they prepare to deploy and for the duration of their deployment."

More Airmen are scheduled to leave in the coming days and weeks as required. The Airmen will be deployed for approximately six months. ***(PR)***

Airmen from the Guam Air National Guard's 254th Security Forces Squadron pose for a photo with Guam National Guard leadership at the Guam International Airport Authority last week, just prior to departing for a deployment in support of Operation Inherent Resolve in Southwest Asia.

MAJ. JOSEPHINE BLAS, PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER FOR THE GUAM NATIONAL GUARD

Chaplain William Kirkland, at center, leads Airmen, from the 254th Force Support Squadron, and their families in prayer, at the Guam International Airport Authority, prior to their departure over the weekend for a deployment in support of Operation Inherent Resolve in Southwest Asia.

MAJ. JOSEPHINE BLAS, PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER FOR THE GUAM NATIONAL GUARD

CUC has 58 contract projects worth $159.4M

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. as of November 2018 has 58 contracts for various projects with an aggregate total amount of approximately $159.4 million.

In his report about CUC's overall activity last November, CUC executive director Gary P. Camacho disclosed that 38 contracts are for active projects while the remaining 20 are in-processing as new contracts or as change orders to current contracts.

» Most contracts are for water-waste water projects

Camacho's report was filed last Friday before the U.S. District Court for the NMI.

U.S. District Court for the NMI designated Judge David O. Carter will hold a weeklong status conference about various CUC projects that will begin on Jan. 29, 2019.

Carter informed the parties that he would like to learn on the status of the various activities and requirements relevant to federal court's Stipulated Orders 1 and 2 (SO1 and 2)

SO 1 focuses on drinking water and wastewater and the restructuring of CUC's organization.

SO 2 focuses on oil issues and also applies to oil spills and the remediation of the contaminated power plants.

Camacho said among CUC's divisions, water-wastewater has the highest number of contracts—21 worth approximately $4.7 million.

He said the power generation division has only 17 contracts, but the cumulative sum of these contracts are worth approximately $147.5 million, the highest amount among the divisions.

Camacho said 13 contracts are funded by grants from the Federal Emergency Management Agency, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Insular Affairs, and the CNMI.

He said CUC funded the remaining 45 contracts.

Camacho said the amount of contracts funded by grants is 7 percent of the grant total amount.

Last August, Camacho informed the federal court that last June, CUC monitored 54 project contracts with an aggregate amount of approximately $149.3 million.

He said 49 are active projects while five are in-processing as new contracts or as change orders to current contracts.

#MarianasStrong Inaugural Concert

PHOTOS By ERWIN ENCINARES

Marianas Young Professionals executive director Gerard Van Gils receives a plaque of recognition from Gov. Ralph DLG Torres during last Saturday's #MarianasStrong inaugural concert at the Marianas Business Plaza.

Kanoa Resort personnel distribute relief goods at the Marianas Strong concert Saturday evening.

Guam Sen. Wil Castro enjoys the concert at the dance floor.

U.S. Department of Defense coordinating officer Harry Elliott is presented a plaque of recognition from the governor.

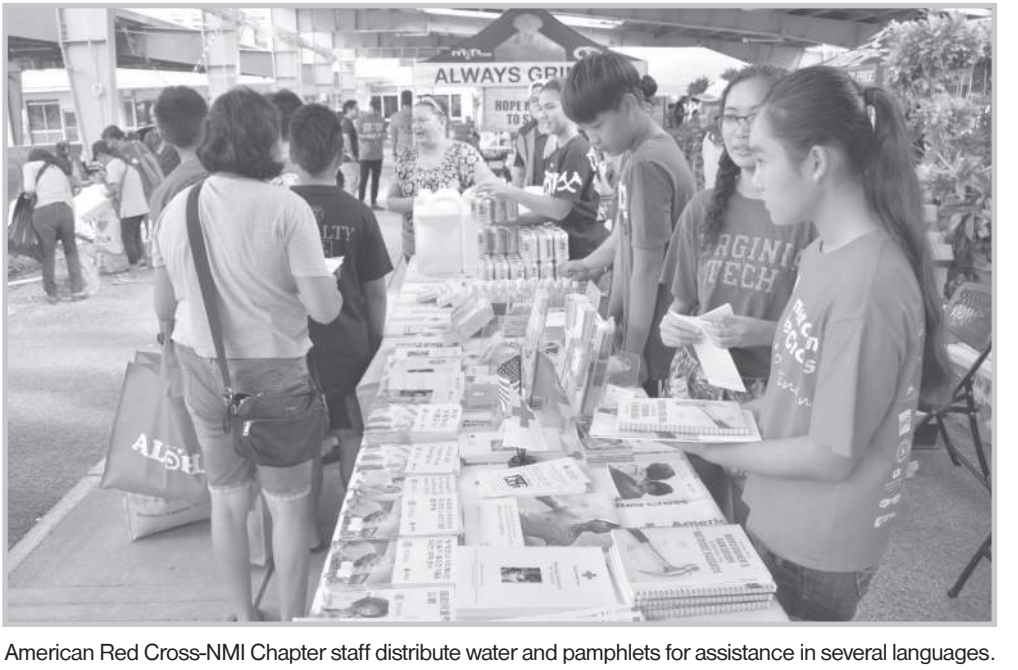
Salvation Army program coordinator Annie Lizama receives a plaque of recognition.

Federal Emergency Management Agency deputy regional administrator Bill Roche receives a plaque of recognition from Gov. Ralph DLG Torres.

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres presents to American Red Cross-NMI Chapter executive director John Hirsh a plaque of recognition for Yutu recovery efforts.

Hundreds attend the Marianas Strong concert last Saturday evening.

The Lady Diann Foundation in partnership with the Empty Vessel Ministry Foundation distributed donations to concertgoers last Saturday.



American Red Cross-NMI Chapter staff distribute water and pamphlets for assistance in several languages.

Guam, CNMI push One Marianas initiative

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A Guam senator who pioneered the One Marianas movement said that both the CNMI and Guam are excited to push forward with the initiative.

According to Guam Sen. Will Castro, both Guam and the CNMI administrations and legislative bodies have affirmed their desire to continue the strong working relations between Guam and the CNMI and the One Marianas movement.

The One Marianas movement seeks to identify and establish dialogue between Guam and the CNMI on ways the two governments can help each other.

KIMBERLY BAUTISTA
Guam Sen. Will Castro poses for a photo during the inauguration ceremony of Gov. Ralph DLG Torres and Lt. Gov. Arnold Palacios last Monday at the NMI Soccer Training Center in Koblerville.

"We'll be addressing issues of food security, free trade, equal economic development … issues relating to insurance coverage for medical referral to Guam… then you have those who want to address a universal parking access for persons with special needs… So if you are of special needs, you can take your special needs access parking card to Guam and it will be allowable for a certain amount of days so I got to work that out but those are the things we're looking at on the horizon," he said.

Castro said that although those are just small variables, both Guam and CNMI legislative bodies are also looking at long term and strategic means of bettering the relationship between the sister islands.

"My position has always been, individually we can achieve so much, we've seen what the challenges were over the decades, even centuries, but together the opportunities are limitless," he said.

GOVGUAM VISIT
JON PEREZ
Guam Gov. Lou Leon Guerrero, right, greets Guam Power Authority personnel assisting in restoring power at the William S. Reyes Elementary School in Chalan Kanoa.

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Joeten-Kiyu Public Library closed for Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

The Joeten-Kiyu Public Library will be closed on Tuesday, Jan. 22, 2019 in lieu of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Day holiday. It will reopen on Wednesday, Jan. 23, 2019 for regular hours. Please enjoy the time with family and friends!

For the latest news and events, please visit the Joeten-Kiyu Public Library's website at www.cnmilib.org and like and/or follow JKPL's Facebook page, @joeten kiyu. Follow the library on Instagram @joetenkiyu and Pinterest @ Joeten Kiyu. The Joeten-Kiyu Public Library's hours of operation are as follows: Tuesday-Friday, 10am-6pm, Saturday, 9am-4pm, and closed Sundays, Mondays and holidays. ***(PR)***

Saipan beach red-flagged

The Division of Environmental Quality has red-flagged Dai-Ichi AI- (Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan) hotel and is advising the public not to fish or swim within 300 feet of this location for the next 48 hours or until otherwise notified.

Samples collected from this location contained excessive concentrations of fecal indicator bacteria (enterococci) that exceeded the CNMI Marine Water Quality Standards. These bacteria can indicate the presence of human and animal waste in the water.

DEQ analyzes water samples collected from Saipan's recreational beaches and storm drainage every Tuesday. For more information, contact DEQ at 664-8500. ***(DEQ)***

Chamber to name BPOY on Saturday

The Saipan Chamber of Commerce will be selecting on Jan. 19 one of eight nominees the 2018 Business Person of the Year at the annual gala at the Hyatt Regency Ballroom.

The nominees are Gloria Cavanaugh of Pacific Islands Club Saipan; John Hirsh of the American Red Cross Northern Mariana Islands Chapter; Nola Hix of Xerox Corp; Glen Hunter of The Shack; James Lee of Marpac, Inc.; Velma Palacios of IT&E; Ron Smith of Angil Design; and Janice Tenorio of IT&E.

Along with "Business Person of the Year," the event will also recognize the "2018 Saipan Young Professional" of the year as well as the Installation of the 2019 board of directors.

Seats to the event are limited and available for advance purchase for $100 per person.

To order tickets, email Mercilynn at administrator@saipanchamber.com, call 234-7150, or visit the third floor of the Marianas Business Plaza in Susupe for more information. ***(PR)***

Humanities awards on Jan. 24

The Northern Marianas Humanities Council will be hosting the 21st Governor's Humanities Awards at the Hyatt Regency Saipan's Giovanni's Restaurant on Thursday, Jan. 24, starting at 11am. ***(PR)***

Flashback
A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

January 17, 2000

Visitor arrivals slightly up in December

Visitor arrivals reached 44,325, or an increase of 2.79 percent, in December 1999 compared to the same period the previous year, according to the Marianas Visitors Authority. Korea has consistently led the growth with a significant increase of 43 percent. Japan, the CNMI's biggest market did not show any growth with a total visitor arrivals of 32,080 in December 1999 compared to the same period in the previous year, despite the millennium packaged tours. But MVA said the flat growth may be attributed to the decline in ship arrivals that brought in 1,262 passengers compared to 2,232 in December 1998. Traditionally, December is a peak period for ship arrivals, however there were cancellations due to the Y2K bug.

Decline in construction sector noted

Not even the construction industry in the Northern Marianas was spared from the hex of external economic forces, manifested by a sharp decline in the number of building permits issued by the Department of Commerce last year.

The commerce department's Economic Development Division issued only 93 building permits during the second quarter of 1999, dropping from the preceding quarter's 119. During the same period in 1998, the government approved 122 construction permit application, involving at least $20 million. At least 37 or $15 million of which were intended for commercial establishments while 85 or $5.9 million were for residential units. In terms of value in US dollars, activities in the islands' construction industry dropped by $7 million to $7.8 million in January to March 1999 compared with the previous year of the same period's $14.8 million.

January 17, 2001

$3.4M loan for Kobler project okayed

The Northern Marianas Housing Corporation yesterday disclosed it will seal a $3.5 million loan agreement with the Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank, which will be used as additional funding for the Koblerville expansion project on Saipan. The approved loan will be was closed today at the Commonwealth Development Authority. The loan funds would serve as interim financing for the 45 unit residential housing subdivision located at the southern part of Saipan. The housing project, which has 2-, 3- and 4- bedroom units, including three that are designed for people with disabilities, is anticipated to be completed in April 2001.

The subdivision is totally developed with paved roads, public power and water distribution and sewer systems.

Senate okays release of $50M for CIP

The Senate passed yesterday a measure appropriating $50 million for various Capital Improvement Projects following the release of the proceeds from the $60 million bond flotation. Of the $50 million fund, $25 million will come from the proceeds of the bond while the remaining $25 million will come from the Covenant Section 702 Funding as specified under House Bill 12-130. At least ten projects for the First Senatorial District of Rota amounting to $18, 455,000 will be carried out, nine projects from the Second Senatorial District of Tinian amounting to $11, 945,000 and the projects to be identified in order of priority in the Third Senatorial District of Saipan will get a total of $19, 750, 000. Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio has hailed the successful bond flotation which he said will help lift the sagging economy. The bond proceeds have been set aside to match equal amount of federal construction grants under the CIP/Covenant 702 funding.

January 17, 2005

DoF: PSS payroll safe, other funds due by Jan. 31

Finance Secretary Fermin Atalig said yesterday that payroll funds for the Public School System personnel would be made available this week. Atalig said he is in close communications with the Bank of Guam to ensure that personnel payroll would not be interrupted. "They [PSS] can issue the payroll, I'll be responsible with the bank," said Atalig. At the same time, Atalig said that additional money would be remitted to the Public School System on or before Jan. 31, not Jan. 14 as earlier expected.

'SEA schools have only 10 percent NCLEX passing ratio'

Only 10 percent of graduates from nursing schools in Southeast Asia pass the National Council Nursing Licensure Examination, while most counterpart schools in the U.S. mainland have a passing rate of 85 percent. This was cited by the proponents of a medical school on Saipan to justify that the CNMI needs a U.S. type nursing school to produce quality graduates. In a concept paper, Dr. Johnny Fong, Loyola Medical College Foundation board chair, said that American schools offer two and four-year degree programs in nursing. Their NCLEX passing rate is 85 percent, but most of these schools, he said, limit enrolment. So relying on them would not meet the growing need for more English speaking nurses in the next decade or so.

Democratic Hawaii Rep. Gabbard running for president in 2020

W A S H I N G T O N (AP)—Democratic Rep. Tulsi Gabbard of Hawaii has announced that she is running for president in 2020.

Gabbard said in a CNN interview slated to air Saturday night that she will be formally announcing her candidacy within the next week.

The 37-year-old Iraq War veteran is the first Hindu elected to Congress and the first member born in the U.S. territory of American Samoa. She has visited early primary and caucus states New Hampshire and Iowa in recent months and has written a memoir that's due to be published in May.

Gabbard is joining what is expected to be a crowded Democratic field. Sen. Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts has already formed an exploratory committee and is moving quickly with trips across early primary states. California Sen. Kamala Harris, New Jersey Sen. Cory Booker and Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders are all weighing their own presidential bids and are expected to announce decisions in the upcoming weeks. Former Obama administration housing chief Julian Castro plans to announce his run for the presidency on Saturday.

Gabbard's run would not be without controversy. In 2016, she alarmed fellow Democrats when she met with Donald Trump during his transition to president and later when she took a secret trip to Syria and met with President Bashar Assad, who has been accused of war crimes and genocide. She questioned whether he was responsible for a chemical attack on civilians that killed dozens and led the U.S. to attack a Syrian air base.

She said she doesn't regret the trip and considers it important to meet with adversaries if "you are serious about pursuing peace." She also noted that the 2003 invasion of Iraq was based on faulty intelligence and said that she wanted to understand the evidence of the Syria attack.

Gabbard was one of the most prominent lawmakers to back Sanders over Hillary Clinton in the 2016 Democratic presidential primary. Her endorsement came in dramatic fashion, with her resigning as a vice chairwoman of the Democratic National Committee to express her support.

Asked last year whether she would still consider running if Sanders ran, Gabbard said Sanders is a friend and she didn't know what his plans were.

"I'm thinking through how I can best be of service and I'll make my decision based on that," she said.

AP

In this Nov. 6, 2018, file photo, Rep. Tulsi Gabbard, D-Hawaii, greets supporters in Honolulu.

EXERCISE SEA DRAGON

ANDERSEN AIR FORCE BASE, Guam—A P-8A Poseidon, assigned to the "Golden Swordsmen" of Patrol Squadron 47, exits the flightline following flight operations Jan. 15. Exercise Sea Dragon is an annual, multilateral exercise that stresses coordinated anti-submarine warfare prosecution against both simulated and live targets.

U.S. NAVY PHOTOS BY MASS COMMUNICATION SPECIALIST 1ST CLASS KEVIN A. FLINN

ANDERSEN AIR FORCE BASE, Guam—Airman Joseph Harding, assigned to the "Golden Swordsmen" of Patrol Squadron (VP) 47, guides a VP-47 P-8A Poseidon to park following flight operations Jan. 15. Exercise Sea Dragon is an annual, multilateral exercise that stresses coordinated anti-submarine warfare prosecution against both simulated and live targets.

ANDERSEN AIR FORCE BASE, Guam—Aviation Electrician's Mate 2nd Class Ryan Murphy, assigned to the "Golden Swordsmen" of Patrol Squadron (VP) 47, grounds a P-8A Poseidon following flight operations Jan. 15. Exercise Sea Dragon is an annual, multilateral exercise that stresses coordinated anti-submarine warfare prosecution against both simulated and live targets.

ANDERSEN AIR FORCE BASE, Guam—Airman Joseph Harding, assigned to the "Golden Swordsmen" of Patrol Squadron (VP) 47, guides a VP-47 P-8A Poseidon to park following flight operations Jan. 15. Exercise Sea Dragon is an annual, multilateral exercise that stresses coordinated anti-submarine warfare prosecution against both simulated and live targets.

ANDERSEN AIR FORCE BASE, Guam—Airman Joseph Harding, front, assists Aircrewman (Operator) 2nd Class Kevin Henderson, back, both assigned to the "Golden Swordsmen" of Patrol Squadron 47, while lowering airstairs from a VP-47 P-8A Poseidon following flight operations Jan. 15. Exercise Sea Dragon is an annual, multilateral exercise that stresses coordinated anti-submarine warfare prosecution against both simulated and live targets.

ANDERSEN AIR FORCE BASE, Guam—Aviation Ordnanceman 2nd Class Ashley Latson, top, passes a sonobuoy expendable to Aviation Ordnanceman Daniel Reed, bottom, both assigned to the "Golden Swordsmen" of Patrol Squadron 47, following flight operations Jan. 15. Exercise Sea Dragon is an annual, multilateral exercise that stresses coordinated anti-submarine warfare prosecution against both simulated and live targets.

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
Volume XXIX, Issue No. 11

Published daily at 2/F JP Center,
Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI
Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP, 96950

Jayvee L. Vallejera EDITOR
editor@saipantribune.com

Mark Rabago ASSOCIATE EDITOR
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com

MEMBER

The Associated Press | Pacific Islands News Association

I SEE YOU TRYING TO SNEAK ACROSS THE BORDER!! IF I WERE YOU, I'D TURN AROUND AND RUN!!
U.S. BORDER KEEP OUT!
U.S. BORDER KEEP OUT!
©2019 Mike Shelton cartoons.com
"It's one of them Ring doorbells."

EDITORIAL

Two new reports add urgency to examining Trump's relationship with Russia

Two blockbuster news reports have added ominous new dimensions to the already disturbing issue of President Donald Trump's interactions with Russia's government. The New York Times reported Friday that early in Trump's presidency, the FBI was concerned enough about his aggressive attacks on the Russia probe that it launched an investigation into whether he was working against America's interests on behalf of Moscow.

And The Washington Post reported Sunday that after meeting privately with President Vladimir Putin in 2017, Trump confiscated his translator's notes and ordered the content of the conversation withheld from even members of his own administration.

Neither revelation is proof that Trump has betrayed America's interests due to personal business with, or blackmail by, Putin's government — but the possibility can no longer be dismissed. Congress must be relentless in getting to the truth of the matter.

The Times reported that, days after Trump fired FBI Director James Comey in May 2017, the FBI opened an investigation into whether Trump had been working on Russia's behalf against American interests.

Trump and his loyalists dismiss that investigation as a "deep state" plot against the president. But to Americans of all political stripes, it should be clear that a failure by the FBI to conduct such an investigation would have been an egregious dereliction of duty given the serious concerns officials had.

After all, Trump admitted in a televised interview that he fired Comey, the man overseeing the Russia investigation, in part because of that investigation. That the FBI responded by trying to determine whether Trump had something to hide is welcome confirmation that it was doing its job, despite the president's blatant attempts to prevent that.

The Washington Post charted what it called the "extraordinary lengths" Trump has gone to in preventing his own top officials from learning details of his private conversations with Putin. It recounted a 2017 meeting of the two leaders in Hamburg, after which Trump reportedly confiscated his translator's notes and instructed the person not to disclose the contents of the conversation even to other administration officials.

Against that backdrop, consider Trump's other actions as president: lifting sanctions against Russian business interests with ties to Putin; announcing a U.S. withdrawal from Syria, to the delight of Putin and to the dismay of America's allies; saying he believes Putin's denial of U.S. election tampering over the unambiguous conclusions of U.S. intelligence agencies.

Also consider that Trump consistently refuses to criticize Putin despite the Russian leader's egregious record of

See RUSSIA on Next Page

Courts won't stop Trump

By JOHN YOO
Los Angeles Times

John Yoo is a law professor at UC Berkeley, a visiting scholar at the American Enterprise Institute and a visiting fellow at the Hoover Institution.

President Donald Trump's threat to declare a national emergency and build a wall along the U.S.-Mexico border may not be sound policy, but the president's critics are wrong when they say he cannot constitutionally do it. If Trump makes good on his plan, he would almost certainly win in court.

Speaking for Trump's Democratic opponents, Rep. Adam B. Schiff of California has called Trump's idea "a nonstarter" and said point-blank that "this president doesn't have the power to declare an emergency and build a multibillion-dollar wall on the border." Some conservatives have objected as well: National Review's David French judges Trump's plan "a lawless abuse of power."

These attacks ignore the very design of the American presidency and the way Congress has amplified it. The Founders wisely didn't try to limit the government's power to deal with crises and emergencies. Because the "circumstances that endanger the safety of nations are infinite," Alexander Hamilton warned in Federalist 23, "no constitutional shackles can wisely be imposed on the power."

Instead, the Constitution creates a single, independent executive who can immediately respond with "decision, activity, secrecy and dispatch," in Hamilton's words. Thomas Jefferson during the Aaron Burr controversy, Andrew Jackson during the nullification crisis, Abraham Lincoln in the Civil War, and FDR during the Great Depression and World War II all called upon these executive powers during emergencies.

And through our history, Congress and the courts have largely cooperated. The 1976 National Emergencies Act, for example, does not define a national emergency or limit the president's right to declare one. The Supreme Court has never overturned a national emergency declaration, even in cases less dire than the situation at the southern border (Barack Obama declared an emergency out of fear of swine flu; Ronald Reagan declared one when an export control law expired).

Congress has even added to the president's powers once a national emergency has been declared. Under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, presidents regularly impose economic sanctions — such as those enacted against North Korea and Iran — after announcing an emergency.

If Trump declares a border emergency, Section 2808 of Title 10 of U.S. law provides authority to build a wall: When a national emergency "requires use of the armed forces," the Defense Department "may undertake military construction projects … not otherwise authorized by law that are necessary to support such use of the armed forces."

As commander in chief, Trump has already ordered 3,000 troops to defend the nation's territorial integrity at the southern border. A wall, arguably, would support those troops by protecting them and reducing the need for more troops, And other, similar laws would allow Trump to redirect funds from civil works projects and drug interdiction programs toward construction of a wall he decided was needed during a national emergency.

The counterargument to all of this relies on the 1952 Supreme Court case Youngstown Sheet & Tube vs. Sawyer.

During the Korean War, President Truman ordered U.S. steel mills to operate despite a nationwide strike because he wanted to keep materiel flowing to the front. The court concluded that seizing the mills was unconstitutional, a legislative act that could only be authorized by Congress. The link between the Korean battlefield, where the court acknowledged presidential power was at its height, and steel mills in Ohio was just too attenuated.

The Youngstown case doesn't apply closely to the border situation; the facts are different. First, the court didn't question the president's right to declare an emergency during the strike, just the constitutionality of his seizing the steel mills. And Trump need not rely on any constitutional power to move from the emergency declaration to building the wall because Congress has already delegated military construction power to him.

Legal arguments, of course, do not settle the matter. Just because Trump could declare an emergency and order and pay for construction of a wall doesn't mean he should. Migrants at the border may not create a real crisis, and invoking such an "emergency" to solve a political dispute over government funding and shutdowns wastes valuable executive capital that might be needed for an undeniable crisis in the future.

Any power, no matter how reasonable in design, can be abused. But it is Congress, not the courts, that should check the president. Supreme Court justices are unlikely to substitute their judgment on the use of troops and military necessity for that of the commander in chief and our elected representatives. Congress can use its appropriations powers to specifically prevent the president from reallocating military and civil funds to build a border wall. And it can resort to impeachment to counter anything it considers to be abuse of power.

Opponents of Trump's use of emergency powers should look to where the final responsibility lies — the Senate and the House of Representatives — rather than to legal arguments that will not stop the construction of a border wall.

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the name, village address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Pinadesen 15-Mit

Hu akanteha haf` na sapet mafafana` ni 15-mit na empleau guine ni gumagana suetdun popble espesiatmente kualidat linala` familian niha.

Namanman sa` dispues de 40 añus gagaige ha` este na sapet gi halum guma` familia: suetdun popble! Manu `nai masge` pinetsigen miyu sumatba este na sapet?

Kau mañasaunau hamyu man-mamogsai nu este na chinatsaga para u guaha eskusun miyu otru pasadu na offresimientu? Kuarenta añus na diskuidu! Ha fañagu nuebu na kuttura: diskuidu!

Gaige i chinatsaga (dispues de apas guma` yan karetan familia) gi ti nahuñg salape` gi monedan familia para otru siha nesessidat famaguon. Inklusu guine magagu, doga, trastes eskuela yan otru prisisu.

Estague` i te`ug na pinadese gi halum 15-mit na familia ni gumagana suetdun popble. Diariu este na sapet. Un` sinparat na atburotu gi mañaina yan fuetsau na chinatsaga gi famaguon. Gi uttimu todu i dos mansinapet pot ti sufisiente salape gi monedan familia.

I kutturan ina`yuda tumampe pinadesen megai gi tautau-ta mina` ti anog. Haf` mohon? Na ti este i fitme na pisu gi kuttura-ta i ina`ayuda?

Haf` gaige gi hinassun miyu (kumu manma-elihe) satbasion este na sapet gi halum guma` familia? Na ti este solu primera na obligasion miyu?

`Sino guaha `nai mandana` hamyu para `in tampa satbasion adelantu gi kualidat linala` familia ni `in represesenta? Hu atisa i asuntu pot klaru na megai na familia pumadedese diskuidun hegsu` I Deni`.

I federal minimum wage ennau i $7.50 gi ora. Kase i "living wage" ti mas de menus ke $15 gi ora. La dañkulu na obligasion. Siña mohon?

Manu? I suetdun popble sapet para megai na familia guine. Megaiña sumuñgun i kondision `nai man-mapega siha pot taya` mas siña machogue. Hamyu ni offisiat `nai gaige este na obligasion.

Hamyu fumatinas promesan adelantun kualidat na linala` para familian tautau-ta. Siña `in apunta haf` `in chegue guine gi alacha para `in cheneg este na asuntu mona?

Magahet na taya `in kemple gi 40 anüs na tiempu para `in adelanta suetdun empleau siha guine? Trabiha i asuntu gaige gi minimum wage. Mas la fotte na obligasion yangin i publiku ha choneg apas "living wage".

Ineppe: Haf` lini`e miyu propiu sahyan para `in satba i suetdun popble gi 15-mit na familia siha ni `in represesenta? Ni kuantu na speech ni gueku ti `in satba I asuntu sin fotmat na planu.

Debi u guaha inali`e manma-elihe `nai guaha sattun na diniseha tumamtam taimanu este na sapet masatba sin ditension. Prisisu na `inna` guaha mafotma planu guine na puntu. Planu este na attikulu ha nesessita pot gai mutmorasion.

Pot ihemplo: Haf` este na asuntu ha nesessita para u fan gama todu i boti gi halum safu na puettu? Magahet na tatnai `in atan este na puntu?

Pipinu`: Suetdun popble gi 15-mit na empleau destrosiu gi ha`anen familian niha. Diariu mafana` ti nahuñg kopble gi monedan familia espesiatmente para nesessidat famaguon. Makat gi dos saina `nai mattu papa` gi nesessidat magagu, doga, yan otru prisisu para i famaguon niha.

Malofan-yu` guine na katsada gi hiniben-hu mina` hu dimemoria te`ug na pinadesen un` popble na guma` familia. Kuantu biahe humanau-yu` para eskuela yan hanum grifu gi estomagu-hu. Dispues, ti hinalulula-yu` tatte para amotsan talo`ane sa` taya` para bai`n kanu`.

By JOHN S. DELROSARIO JR.
Special to the Saipan Tribune

John DelRosario Jr. is a former publisher of the Saipan Tribune *and a former secretary of the Department of Public Lands. All views expressed by the author are his/her own and do not necessarily reflect the opinion and stance of the* Saipan Tribune*.*

I manma-elihe estague` na puntu gi todu asuntu guine debi fuetsau `in atan pot fotmat na satbasion. Nesessidat familia `nai siña magosa kualidat na linala`. Mit grasias para i mañaina-hu ni fumanu`e ham na debi bai`n fachuchu`e todu nesessidat mame.

Poresu na `in usune maseha haf` na cho`chu` guihe na tiempu kontodu tres dias manman-uma kestat simientu gi Saipan Stevedoring. Finapus popble!

Ti mamahlau-yu` pot hu gana tres pesus gi dia pot nesessidat. Lau banidosyu` sa` ti mañake-yu` kosas tautau para benefisiog-hu. Magahet na tat che`lu ti muna`e animu gi halum mattirun miserapble na pinepble! Agradesimientu gi Saina pot todu i tiempu kulan guiya umesgaihon ham gi halum te`ug na mattirun pinepble.

Kilu`us: Un` kantan relihion ha mensiona pot chagu` hogsu` `nai gaige un` kilu`us señat sinetsut yan pininite. I pumokate ya mattu guihe na hogsu` ha gu`ot i troñkun i kilu`us. Tiha sotta `sino diñgu estake ha siente na ma-echague` bendision ginen fuetsan ayu na kilu`us.

Gi todu finapos-ta mauleg ta asegura na gaige añklan espirituat gi sagaña diariamente. Estague` umasegura na ti u lauya botimu gi halum napun mattirun asunto-ta siha gi ha`anita.

Trump team threatens national security

If you're worried abut the security of the United States after President Donald Trump's disgraceful dismissal of Gen. James Mattis as Secretary of Defense, you also need to look inside the U.S. government to examine the Trump hangers-on who are downgrading the professionalism of key government agencies.

For example, on Inauguration Day, according to Michael Lewis in his new book, "The Fifth Risk," Mr. Trump, utterly unprepared for governing after a narrow victory, sent these folks to help run the Department of Agriculture: "A long-haul truck driver, a telephone company clerk, a gas company meter reader, a country club cabana attendant, a Republican National Committee intern and the owner of a scented candle company."

Similar appointments of political faithful and lobbyists with scant knowledge or strong industry positions were made throughout the U.S. government, including in agencies responsible for nuclear waste, food safety and hurricane warnings. A 23-year-old Trump campaign worker was named deputy head of the opioid crisis office in the White House. These Trump lieutenants ordered data suppression throughout multiple agencies.

The dumbing down of the American government, a condition that starts at the top with a president who brags that he does not read books or need intelligence briefings, extends to Capitol Hill.

As the 116th Congress opens, look no further than the two most important committees on national security in the U. S. Senate.

Gone is the late John McCain, who chaired the Armed Services Committee for years with knowledge, deep experience in military matters and courage — and a readiness to stand up to Mr. Trump's fanboy relationship with Russian president Vladimir Putin.

Also gone are smart, bipartisan ex-chairmen such as Republican John Warner and Democrats Carl Levin and Sam Nunn. Mr. Nunn worked with Republicans after the collapse of the Soviet Union to craft vital legislation on dismantling its nuclear, biological and chemical weapons.

Now the chairman is 84-year-old James H. Inhofe of Oklahoma. Senator Inhofe's own official biography says "our country is in the most threatened position in American history…" Really, Senator?

Has Mr. Inhofe forgotten the Cold War and the daily threat of nuclear annihilation from the Soviet Union? The gravity of the Cuban missile crisis? World War II, Pearl Harbor, the Depression, the 2008 financial meltdown?

Mr. Inhofe, who has called climate change "the greatest hoax," is responsible for foisting on the government the services of Scott Pruitt, the disgraced former head of the Environmental Protection Agency and several former Inhofe aides, who have been able to trash dozens of environmental protections, including an order to roll back rules designed to protect 60 percent of the nation's water bodies.

Like Mr. Pruitt, Mr. Inhofe has been accused of corrupt practices — buying large amounts of the stock of a giant defense contractor after urging Mr. Trump to increase the defense budget significantly. He sold the stock.

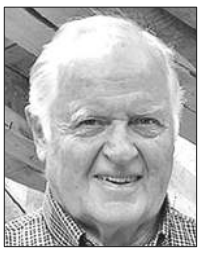
Another key Senate committee — the Senate Foreign Relations Committee — is being turned over to an equally unremarkable senator: Idaho Sen. James Risch, 75, a former governor who gained that position by appointment.

Another climate change denier and an A+ NRA supporter who "prayed" for the victims of the various shooting massacres but opposes background checks, Mr. Risch is an unabashed supporter of Mr. Trump.

Compare his credentials to his predecessors. Sen. Richard Lugar, Republican of Indiana and chairman for two terms, worked tirelessly with Senator Nunn on nuclear dismantlement. Idaho Democrat Frank Church oversaw investigations of intelligence abuses. J. William Fulbright, Democrat of Arkansas, helped manage the Johnson administration's misguided Gulf of Tonkin resolution but redeemed himself with careful, balanced explorations of the causes and mistakes of the Vietnam war. And Arthur Vandenberg, Republican of Michigan, was a moderate of the kind GOP leaders might seek out to regain respect for their party in the age of Mr. Trump.

At the end of World War II, Vandenberg delivered a courageous speech in which he declared that partisan politics "must stop at the water's edge." He went on to cooperate with President Truman in the establishment of the Marshall Plan and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) — both linchpins of the Western alliance ever since.

And who is doing his utmost to undermine both organizations today, putting in grave question America's national interests and international leadership? A Republican president: Donald J. Trump.



By FREDERIC B. HILL
The Baltimore Sun

Frederic B. Hill was a former correspondent for The Baltimore Sun*, and foreign affairs director for Sen. Charles McC. Mathias Jr., a Maryland Republican and a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. He also is co-editor, with Stephens Broening, on a book about The Baltimore Sun: "The Life of Kings."*

RUSSIA

From Page 10

military incursions and human rights abuses. It's an immunity that Putin alone seems to enjoy.

These are serious national security concerns, not simply more of the same scandals that have come to define Trump's administration. America must, once and for all, get to the bottom of its president's murky relationship with the nation's most formidable geopolitical foe.

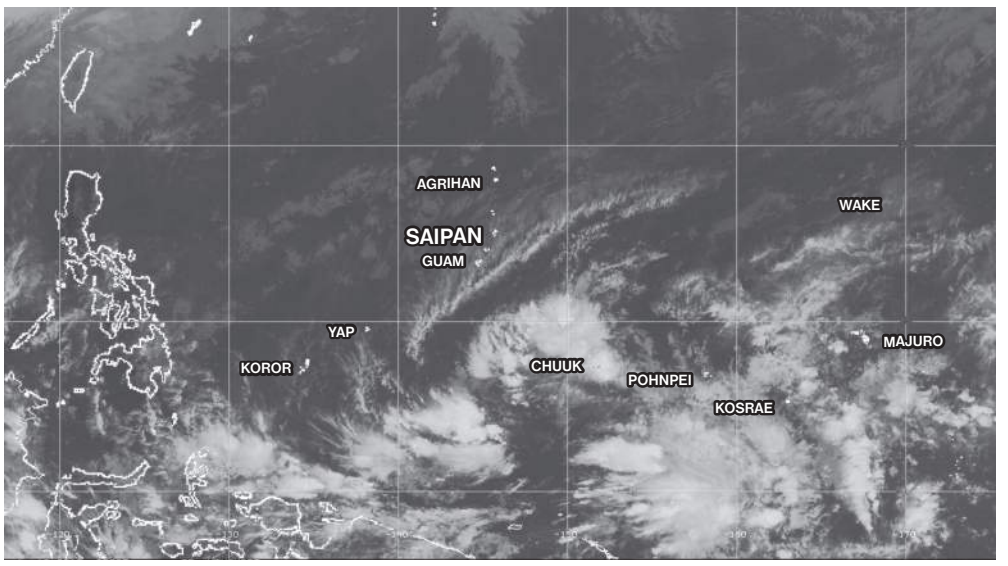
©2019 St. Louis Post-Dispatch

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY
Mostly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 15 to 25 mph.	Mostly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 15 to 25 mph.	Partly cloudy and breezy with a slight chance of showers.	Partly cloudy and breezy with a slight chance of showers.	Partly cloudy and breezy with a slight chance of showers.
89º / 77º	89º / 77º	88º / 77º	88º / 77º	89º / 77º

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 7:07 AM, WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 16, 2019
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

The next few days look to be fairly cloudy but today and Thursday should be mainly dry. The remnants of Tropical Depression 01W will pass south of Guam tonight into Thursday and most model guidance keeps the showers to the south. However, it wouldn`t be surprising to see a few showers from the disturbance make it into the coastal waters or perhaps even make it to Guam. Guidance also suggests that there could be some additional showers on Friday in the convergence into the system as it moves westward, will monitor this to see if rain chances need to be increased. Afterward, it looks fairly dry into the weekend and into the early part of next week.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA		▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Showers	86° / 78°
Palau	Thunderstorms	82° / 77°
Yap	Cloudy	83° / 78°
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	85° / 80°
Pohnpei	Cloudy	86° / 80°
Kosrae	Cloudy	86° / 80°
Majuro	Partly Cloudy	85° / 80°

AROUND THE GLOBE		▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Cloudy	75° / 64°
Beijing	Mostly Cloudy	43° / 21°
Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	64° / 61°
Honolulu	Showers	81° / 68°
London	Showers	45° / 37°
Los Angeles	Rain	62° / 52°
Manila	Cloudy	86° / 73°
Melbourne	Cloudy	82° / 61°
Miami	Partly Cloudy	76° / 65°
New York	Cloudy	33° / 31°
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	48° / 37°
Paris	Partly Cloudy	46° / 32°
Busan	Mostly Sunny	50° / 34°
Rome	Showers	55° / 48°
Salem	Partly Cloudy	62° / 51°
San Francisco	Rain	56° / 49°
Seoul	Mostly Sunny	43° / 25°
Tokyo	Partly Cloudy	50° / 37°
Washington, DC	Mostly Cloudy	43° / 29°

NMI CRIME STOPPERS
Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:
- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.net

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY		FEET
5:04 AM	HIGH TIDE	1.51
9:52 AM	LOW TIDE	1.08
3:38 PM	HIGH TIDE	1.90
11:07 PM	LOW TIDE	-0.13

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:46 AM	6:07 PM
Friday	6:46 AM	6:07 PM
Saturday	6:47 AM	6:08 PM
Sunday	6:47 AM	6:08 PM
Monday	6:47 AM	6:09 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	2:25 AM	2:16 PM
Friday	-	3:22 AM	3:08 PM
Saturday	-	4:23 AM	4:06 PM
Sunday	-	5:26 AM	5:08 PM
Monday	-	6:29 AM	6:13 PM

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

CUSTOMER SERVICE For inquiries, purchase of back issues and complaints, call (670) 235-8747, 235-2440, fax 235-3740.

SUBSCRIPTION Published Monday to Friday, *Saipan Tribune* offers door-to-door on-island delivery at an annual rate of $180. For additional subscription information, call (670) 235-8747 or 235-2769, or fax 235-3740.

ADVERTISING For inquiries contact (670) 235-2769.
E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF DECEMBER 20, 2018

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA117	9:15am	9:55am	Daily
UA105	4:45pm	5:25pm	2, 4

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

7C3451	3:15am	6:30am	Daily

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

OZ626	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ626	2:50am	6:40am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
7C3401	4:30pm	8:25pm	Daily

TEMPORARILY SUSPENDED:

TW9308	1:10am	4:10am	3, 4
TW308	1:35am	5:20am	Daily
TW9308	3:20am	6:30am	2
TW9308	3:25am	6:30am	5
7C3403	4:35am	8:25am	Daily

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)

3U86486	10:10am	8:50am	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-HANGZHOU (HGH)

JD396	7:30am	11:00am	1
JD396	4:50pm	7:55pm	4

SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)

3U8646	4:30am	7:55am	2, 6

SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK)

MU764	1:30am	6:35am	3, 5, 7

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

UA117/183	9:15am	9:40pm	2, 5 via GUM
UA117/183 via GUM	9:15am	9:50pm	1, 3, 4, 6, 7
UA117/193 GUM-ROR	9:15am	11:50pm	2, 5 via
UA105/183	4:45pm	9:40pm	2 via GUM
UA105/183	4:45pm	9:50pm	4 via GUM

SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)

HX077	1:50am	5:15am	1, 4
OZ626/721	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN
OZ626/721	2:50am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UO43	5:45am	8:40am	1, 3, 5, 7
UA117/159	9:15am	11:00pm	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via GUM
UA105/159	4:45pm	11:00pm	2, 4 via GUM

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA174	7:30am	8:11am	Daily
UA104	3:00pm	3:41pm	2, 4

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

7C3452	9:35pm	2:00am+1	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
7C3452	10:05pm	2:00am+1	1

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN

7C3402	10:10am	3:30pm	Daily
OZ625	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ625	8:20pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

TEMPORARILY SUSPENDED:

TW9307	6:30pm	12:10am+1	2, 3
TW307	7:00pm	12:35am+1	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
TW307	7:05pm	12:35am+1	1
TW9307	9:00pm	2:20am+1	1
TW9307	9:05pm	:25am+1	4
7C3404	10:10pm	3:40am+1	Daily

SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN

3U8647	10:20pm	4:50am+1	3, 4, 6, 7

HANGZHOU (HGH)-SAIPAN

JD395	8:05am	3:30pm	4
JD395	9:35pm	5:00am+1	7

GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN

3U8645	7:55pm	2:40am+1	1, 5

BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN

MU763	4:40pm	12:30am+1	2, 4, 6

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA182/174	12:40am	8:11am+1	3, 6 via GUM
PR110/UA174	10:05pm	8:11am+1	Daily via GUM
UA192/174	10:30pm	8:11am+1	2, 5 via GUM-ROR
UA184/174	10:55pm	8:11am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM

HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN

OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
HX076	5:15pm	12:15am+1	3, 7
UO42	6:50pm	1:45am+1	7
UO42	9:30pm	4:25am+1	2, 4, 6
UA116/174	11:45pm	8:11am+1	2, 4 via GUM
UA116/174	11:55pm	8:11am+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U Sichuan Airlines, 7C Jeju Air, DL Delta Airlines, JD Beijing Capital, UO HK Express, HX HongKong Airlines, MU China Eastern, OZ Asiana Airlines, TW t'way Air, UA United Airlines, PR PAL Express; ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The* Saipan Tribune *is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1301	7:30AM	8:00AM	Daily
1302	11:30AM	12:00PM	Daily
1303	4:00PM	4:30PM	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3101	8:15AM	8:45AM	Daily
3102	1:45PM	2:15PM	Daily
3103	4:45PM	5:15PM	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3401	12:15PM	12:45PM	Daily

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
4301	1:00PM	1:30PM	Daily

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1201	7:00AM	7:15AM	Daily
1202	8:00AM	8:15AM	Daily
1203	9:00AM	9:15AM	Daily
1204	10:00AM	10:15AM	Daily
1205	11:00AM	11:15AM	Daily
1206	12:00PM	12:15PM	Daily
1207	1:00PM	1:15PM	Daily
1208	2:00PM	2:15PM	Daily
1209	3:00PM	3:15PM	Daily
1210	4:00PM	4:15PM	Daily
1211	5:00PM	5:15PM	Daily
1212	6:00PM	6:15PM	Daily

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
2102	7:30AM	7:45AM	Daily
2103	8:30AM	8:45AM	Daily
2104	9:30AM	9:45AM	Daily
2105	10:30AM	10:45AM	Daily
2106	11:30AM	11:45AM	Daily
2107	12:30PM	12:45PM	Daily
2108	1:30PM	1:45PM	Daily
2109	2:30PM	2:45PM	Daily
2110	3:30PM	3:45PM	Daily
2111	4:30PM	4:45PM	Daily
2112	5:30PM	5:45PM	Daily
2113	6:30PM	6:45PM	Daily

Customers First TRIPLE J

TRUCKLOAD SALE

AMAZING DEALS ON DAILY ESSENTIALS, QUALITY BRANDS AND MUST-HAVE ELECTRONICS!

STORE HOURS: WEDNESDAY-FRIDAY 11AM–8PM • SATURDAY 9AM–8PM • SUNDAY 11AM–6PM

NOW OPEN WEDNESDAY THRU SUNDAY

POLAROID 55" SMART UHD HDR TV 55T7U
$799.95

$115.95 QFX 15" BATTERY POWERED BLUETOOTH PA SPEAKER

CRYSTAL GEYSER SPRING WATER 24/0.5LT
$6.95

STERILITE 30GAL LATCHING TOTE BOX
$29.95

$189.95 LG 6,000 BTU A/C LW6017R

WHIRLPOOL 25 CU.FT. 36" SBS REFRIGERATOR
$1,199.95

$169.95 WHIRLPOOL 1.7 CU.FT. OVER-THE-RANGE MICROWAVE

$14.95 STERILITE 1.7 BU WEAVE LAUNDRY BASKET

$599.95 AMANA 4.8 CU.FT. SS ELECTRIC RANGE

$1,199.95 WHIRLPOOL 1.6 CU.FT. STACK WASHER & ELECTRIC DRYER

HUGE SELECTION OF LARGE APPLIANCES NOW AVAILABLE

Customers First TRIPLE J FIVE STAR WHOLESALE FOODS SAIPAN

Scan QR code to LIKE our Facebook page and get the latest deals and products!

For more info, please call: 322-0430

MAJOR CREDIT CARDS ACCEPTED

Customers First TRIPLE J

TRUCKLOAD STORE direct from KMART

STORE HOURS: WEDNESDAY-FRIDAY 11AM–8PM • SATURDAY 9AM–8PM • SUNDAY 11AM–6PM • AMAZING DEALS ON DAILY ESSENTIALS, QUALITY BRANDS AND MUST-HAVE ELECTRONICS!

QFX AUDIOVERSE 12" PARTY BLETOOTH SPEAKER

$69.95

$159.95

LED PICO POCKET PROJECTOR

KENMORE 9" METAL PERSONAL HIGH VELOCITY FAN

$19.95

$12.95

PROCTOR SILEX IRON WITH SPRAY NS

ENERGIZER AAA 16PK

$16.95

SCOTCH TRANSPARENT 3/4" X 250" TAPE 2PACK

$0.95

$8.95

STERILITE 8PC BOWL SET

FLORAL MULTIPURPOSE SQUARE BOWL 9.25"

$3.95

STERILITE 15QT CLEAR LATCH BOX

$9.95

$8.95

STERILITE 2PC DISH DRAINER SET

$69.95

WIFI DOORBELL WITH CAMERA

$10.95

GARMENT RACK WITH WHEELS 65"

BLACK & DECKER 10 CUP FOOD PROCESSOR

$49.95

NINJA PRO BLENDER

$129.95

BETTER CHEF 150 WATT COFFEE GRINDER

$12.95

PROCTOR SILEX TALL POWER CAN OPENER

$12.95

DEAL OF THE WEEK

$44.95

DAHDOUL-EMIRATES 5'3" X 7'2" RUG

PROCTOR SILEX 10CUP COFFEE MAKER BLACK

$14.95

GIBSON GREYSON NS COAT 2PK FRY PAN

$19.95

WHIRLPOOL 1.6 CUFT MICROWAVE 1200W BLK/WHT

$199.95

WHIRLPOOL 18.3 CUFT FF TOP MOUNT REFRIGERATOR

$859.95

STERILITE 12.6GAL STEP-ON WASTEBASKET

$29.95

$12.95

STERILITE 6.6GAL STEP-ON WASTEBASKET

$10.95

PVC 5 GALLON WATER BOTTLE

EVA MAT ROLL 180*200CM

$19.95

GLACIER BAY HIGH EFFICIENCY 2PC TOILET

$139.95

$1.95

AWESOME ULTRA DELUXE DISH SOAP 500Z

WESLO CADENCE R5.2 TREADMILL

$459.95

$39.95

CAMPING TENT SLEEPS 3 PERSON TY-009

$9.95

SLEEPING BAG (047A-2)

KINGSFORD BRIG 15.41LB CHARCOAL

$15.95

$12.95

TARP 4MX5M (13FT*16FT) WATERPROOF FABRIC (263B-1)

DAHDOUL - 27"X54" STANDARD TOWEL

$4.95

$10.95

PLASTIC TACKLE BOX (579-1)

Customers First TRIPLE J FIVE STAR WHOLESALE FOODS SAIPAN

Scan QR code to LIKE our Facebook page and get the latest deals and products!

For more info, please call: 322-0430

Pacific Express · American Express · MasterCard · VISA · JCB · DISCOVER NETWORK

Business

AFTER BREXIT PLAN CRUSHED

UK's May faces no-confidence vote

LONDON (AP)—British lawmakers overwhelmingly rejected Prime Minister Theresa May's divorce deal with the European Union on Tuesday, plunging the Brexit process into chaos and triggering a no-confidence vote that could topple her government.

The defeat was widely expected, but the scale of the House of Commons' vote—432 votes against the government and 202 in support—was devastating for May's fragile leadership.

It followed more than two years of political upheaval in which May has staked her political reputation on getting a Brexit deal and was the biggest defeat for a government in the House of Commons in modern history.

Moments after the result was announced—with Speaker John Bercow bellowing "the noes have it" to a packed Commons chamber—May said it was only right to test whether the government still had lawmakers' support to carry on. Opposition leader Jeremy Corbyn quickly obliged, saying May's government had lost the confidence of Parliament.

Lawmakers will vote Wednesday on his motion of no-confidence. If the government loses, it will have 14 days to overturn the result or face a national election.

Although May lacks an overall majority in Parliament, she looks likely to survive the vote unless lawmakers from her Conservative party rebel. Northern Ireland's Democratic Unionist Party, which props up May's government, said it would support her.

AP

An anti-Brexit demonstrator cries as he gathers outside Parliament square in London, Tuesday, Jan. 15, 2019.

"The House has spoken and the government will listen," May said after the vote, which leaves her Brexit plan on life support just 10 weeks before the country is due to leave the EU on March 29.

May promised to consult lawmakers on future moves, but gave little indication of what she plans to do next. Parliament has given the government until Monday to come up with a new proposal.

She faces a stark choice: Steer the country toward an abrupt "no-deal" break with the EU or try to nudge it toward a softer departure. Meanwhile, lawmakers from both government and opposition parties are trying to wrest control of the Brexit process from a paralyzed government, so that lawmakers by majority vote can specify a new plan for Britain's EU exit.

Huawei founder says company would not share user secrets

SHENZHEN, China (AP)—The founder of China's Huawei, the world's biggest supplier of network gear to phone and internet companies, says his company would not share secrets about its customers and their communication networks.

Ren Zhengfei spoke in a rare meeting with foreign reporters as Huawei Technologies Ltd. tries to protect its access to global telecom carriers that are investing heavily in next-generation technology.

His comments were the 74-year-old former military engineer's most direct public response to accusations his company is controlled by the ruling Communist Party or is required to facilitate Chinese spying.

Huawei is China's first global tech brand. The United States, Australia, Japan and some other governments have imposed curbs on use of its technology over such concerns.

"We would definitely say no to such a request," said Ren when asked how the company would respond to a government demand for confidential information about a foreign buyer of its telecom technology.

Ren said neither he nor the company have ever received a government request for "improper information" about anyone.

Asked whether Huawei would challenge such an order in court, Ren chuckled and said it would be up to Chinese authorities to "file litigation."

Huawei is facing heightened scrutiny as phone carriers prepare to roll out fifth-generation technology in which Huawei is a leading competitor. 5G is designed to support a vast expansion of networks to serve medical devices, self-driving cars and other technology. That increases the cost of potential security failures and has prompted governments increasingly to treat telecoms communications networks as strategic assets.

The company's image suffered a new blow last week when Polish authorities announced one of its Chinese employees was arrested on spying charges. Huawei announced it fired the employee and said the allegations had nothing to do with the company.

Ren is the father of Huawei's chief financial officer, Meng Wanzhou, who was arrested Dec. 1 in Canada on U.S. charges related to possible violations of trade sanctions on Iran.

Nation

Fed workers take on odd jobs to make ends meet

PROVIDENCE, R.I. (AP)—When her paychecks dried up because of the partial government shutdown, Cheryl Inzunza Blum sought out a side job that has become a popular option in the current economy: She rented out a room on Airbnb.

Other government workers are driving for Uber, relying on word-of-mouth and social networks to find handyman work and looking for traditional temp gigs to help pay the bills during the longest shutdown in U.S. history.

The hundreds of thousands of out-of-work government employees have more options than in past shutdowns given the rise of the so-called "gig economy" that has made an entire workforce out of people doing home vacation rentals and driving for companies like Uber, Lyft and Postmates.

Blum decided to capitalize on the busy winter travel season in Arizona to help make ends meet after she stopped getting paid for her government contract work as a lawyer in immigration court in Tucson. She says she has no choice but to continue to work unpaid because she has clients who are depending on her, some of whom are detained or have court hearings.

But she also has bills: her Arizona state bar dues, malpractice insurance and a more than $500 phone bill for the past two months because she uses her phone so heavily for work. Blum bills the government for her work, but the office that pays her hasn't processed any paychecks to her since before the shutdown began. So she's been tapping every source she can to keep herself afloat—even her high school- and college-aged children—and is even thinking about driving for Uber and Lyft as well.

"So after working in court all day I'm going to go home and get the room super clean because they're arriving this evening," she said of her Airbnb renters.

"I have a young man who's visiting town to do some biking, and he's going to come tomorrow and stay a week," she added. "I'm thrilled because that means immediate money. Once they check in, the next day there's some money in my account."

The shutdown is occurring against the backdrop of a strong economy that has millions of open jobs, along with ample opportunities to pick up Uber and Lyft shifts.

The Labor Department reported that employers posted 6.9 million jobs in November, the latest figures available. That's not far from the record high of 7.3 million reached in August.

Roughly 8,700 Uber driver positions are advertised nationwide on the SnagAJob website, while Lyft advertises about 3,000.

But the gig economy doesn't pay all that well—something the furloughed government workers are finding out.

Pay for such workers has declined over the past two years, and they are earning a growing share of their income elsewhere, a recent study found. Most Americans who earn income through online platforms do so for only a few months each year, according to the study by the JPMorgan Chase Institute.

Chris George, 48, of Hemet, California, is furloughed from his job as a forestry technician supervisor for the U.S. Department of Agriculture forest service. He's been driving for Lyft but has only been averaging about $10 for every hour he drives. Paying for gas then eats into whatever money he has made.

He just got word that he'll be getting $450 in weekly unemployment benefits, but hadn't received any money as of Monday. In the meantime, he's taking handyman or other odd jobs wherever he can.

"I've just been doing side jobs when they come along," he said Monday. "I had two last week, and I don't know what this week's going to bring."

Charter school educators back striking Los Angeles teachers

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Los Angeles school administrators urged the union to resume bargaining as thousands of teachers walked picket lines for a second day Tuesday, joined for the first time by some of their counterparts from independent charter schools.

"We need our educators back in our classrooms helping inspire our students," said Unified School District Superintendent Austin Beutner. Teachers are pressing for higher pay, smaller class sizes and more support staff that school officials say could bankrupt the nation's second-largest system.

Teachers with the independent Accelerated Schools charter network—who are also union members but negotiate their contract separately—walked off the job Tuesday to demand better working conditions and in support for public school educators.

Los Angeles is experiencing the same tension over charter schools seen in other states, with critics arguing the privately run public schools hurt district finances by drawing away students and the money that goes with them. Union President Alex Caputo-Pearl has called the funds flowing to charters an "existential threat."

But Caputo-Pearl said the union isn't against all charters, just their "unregulated growth."

"We don't need to have the grow-as-fast-as-you-can business model that's promoted by charter school billionaires," he said. "We need to invest in our existing schools."

Beutner has said he envisions moving toward a system with public and charter schools under the same leadership. Critics contend Beutner, an investment banker with no education background, wants to run schools like a business.

Charter teachers joining the strike is a big deal because it shows they "see themselves in solidarity with the broader body of district educators," said John Rogers, a professor of education at University of California, Los Angeles.

It wasn't clear how many charter teachers walked off the job.

Unlike strikes in other states, all 1,240 K-12 schools in LA Unified were open. The district has hired hundreds of substitutes to replace tens of thousands of staff, a move the union has called irresponsible.

The walkout Monday was marked by a plunge in attendance, with about 144,000 students out of more than 600,000 in class. On Tuesday that number grew to 159,000.

Asia

Taliban suicide bomber kills 4

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP)—A Taliban suicide bomber killed at least four people and wounded scores when he detonated an explosive-laden vehicle late in the evening in the Afghan capital, officials said Tuesday.

It was the latest in a relentless wave of near daily attacks by the Taliban, who now hold sway over about half of the country and regularly target Afghan forces. The violence comes despite stepped-up efforts by the United States to find a negotiated end to the country's 17-year war.

Health Ministry spokesman Wahidullah Mayar said as many as 113 wounded were taken to different hospitals in Kabul after the Monday evening explosion near the Green Village compound, home to several international organizations and guesthouses.

The attack came just hours before the U.S. Embassy in Kabul announced that special envoy to Afghanistan Zalmay Khalilzad arrived in Kabul to meet with President Ashraf Ghani, Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah and other political leaders to discuss next steps in U.S. efforts to facilitate an Afghan-led peace process.

Germany's Foreign Ministry condemned the bombing, in which it said a German police officer was also lightly wounded.

The area has been the frequent target of attacks in the past. Many foreigners live in the compound, which is heavily guarded by Afghan forces and also private security guards. Roads to the area remained blocked by security forces through the night and into Tuesday morning.

» Wounds over 100 in Kabul

Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid claimed the attack in a statement to the media, saying it involved five attackers, including the suicide bomber. The four other attackers engaged Afghan forces in a clash, he said, without elaborating on what happened to them.

One of the victims, 35-year-old pharmacists Emal Fayzi, said he was wounded by shrapnel in the chest as he was walking home in the evening. The blast was so strong, he couldn't see anything for a while. Later, he realized he was inside an ambulance.

"No one is safe in this country, innocent and poor people are the victims of these attacks," Fayzi said from his hospital bed.

Another victim, 13-year-old boy Esmatullah, said his two sisters were wounded inside their home, which had all its windows shattered in the blast.

Interior Ministry spokesman Najib Danish said three military personnel and a civilian were killed while 12 women and 23 children were among the wounded.

Another resident in the area, Sardar Mohammad, 55, said this was the most powerful explosion of all that he had witnessed. Three of his children were wounded, he said, adding that the government should move all military targets out of residential areas to protect civilian lives.

Patrick Andrew, a NATO official in Afghanistan, said the alliance condemns the "despicable attack on innocent people" near Kabul's Green Village.

"The Taliban must stop continuing to use violence against their own people and come to the negotiating table," he added.

The Taliban have so far refused direct talks with Kabul despite pressure by Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and even Pakistan, where Washington says the Taliban leadership is headquartered.

China criticizes Trudeau comments on death penalty case

BEIJING (AP)—China expressed its "strong dissatisfaction" with Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau on Tuesday over his criticism of a death sentence given to a Canadian accused of drug smuggling at a retrial that followed a chilling of relations over the arrest of a senior Chinese technology executive.

Trudeau should "respect the rule of law, respect China's judicial sovereignty, correct mistakes and stop making irresponsible remarks," foreign ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying said.

"We express our strong dissatisfaction with this," Hua told reporters at a daily briefing.

Her comments are the latest sign of a sharp cooling of China-Canada ties since Canada detained Meng Wanzhou, chief financial officer of Chinese telecommunications giant Huawei, on Dec. 1 at the request of the United States.

The U.S. wants Meng extradited to face charges that she committed fraud by misleading banks about the company's business dealings in Iran.

The Liaoning provincial court in northeastern China announced the death sentence for 36-year-old Robert Lloyd Schellenberg on Monday.

Schellenberg was detained more than four years ago, went on trial in 2016 and was initially sentenced to 15 years in prison in November. The Chinese media began republicizing Schellenberg's case after Meng's detention. Within weeks, an appeals court suddenly reversed the earlier decision, saying the sentence was too lenient, and scheduled Monday's retrial with just four days' notice.

The court gave no indication that the death penalty could be commuted, but observers said Schellenberg's fate is likely to be drawn into diplomatic negotiations over China's demand for Meng's release.

Canadian Foreign Minister Chrystia Freeland said Canada has asked China to spare the life of Schellenberg. "We believe it is inhumane and inappropriate, and wherever the death penalty is considered with regard to a Canadian we speak out against it," Freeland said.

Freeland said she had "a very emotional conversation" with Schellenberg's father on Monday.

Schellenberg's defense lawyer, Zhang Dongshuo, said his client plans to appeal the verdict.

"I can't tell you the relationship between Mr. Schellenberg's last appeal procedure and sensitive events which happened in Canada," Zhang said, but he described the timing of Schellenberg's appeal and retrial as "very significant."

He declined to elaborate on the significance or to comment specifically on whether recent developments were linked to Meng.

Zhang, a Beijing-based lawyer who has taken on several high-profile cases involving foreigners arrested in China, previously represented Phan "Sandy" Phan-Gillis, an American woman convicted of espionage and deported back to the U.S. in 2017.

Questions have swirled over the court's rapid retrial and sentencing of Schellenberg. Zhang said while the court's actions were all lawful, they were also "abnormal." Among the unusual features of the proceedings, according to Zhang: the public nature of Schellenberg's December appeal, the swift scheduling of the retrial and the fact that the court announced its sentence just one hour after the trial ended Monday.

World

Al-Shabab extremists claim Nairobi hoteldeadly attack

NAIROBI, Kenya (AP)—Extremists stormed a luxury hotel in Kenya's capital on Tuesday, setting off thunderous explosions and gunning down people at cafe tables in an attack claimed by Africa's deadliest Islamic militant group. A police officer said at least 15 people had died.

Source: AP
Graphic: Staff, Tribune News Service

"It is terrible. What I have seen is terrible," said Charles Njenga, who ran from a scene of blood, broken glass, burning vehicles and pillars of black smoke.

Al-Shabab—the Somalia-based group that carried out the 2013 attack at the nearby Westgate Mall in Nairobi that left 67 people dead—claimed responsibility for the carnage at the DusitD2 hotel complex, which includes bars, restaurants, offices and banks and is in a well-to-do neighborhood with many American, European and Indian expatriates.

A Kenyan police officer said 15 bodies had been taken to the morgue. He spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to speak to reporters. The U.S. State Department confirmed that an American citizen was among those killed, but did not release the victim's identity. Al-Shabab asserted that 47 people were killed but its Shahada news agency post gave no details.

Authorities sent special forces into the hotel to flush out the gunmen. Late Tuesday night, about eight hours after the siege began, Interior Minister Fred Matiang'i said all of the buildings affected had been secured and that security forces were mopping up.

"I would like to reiterate that the situation is under control and the country is safe," he said.

However, more gunfire was heard about an hour later, Kenyan broadcaster NTV reported. Some family members said they had been in touch with loved ones still hiding inside the complex, waiting to be rescued.

Early Wednesday, Kenya's Interior Ministry said a tweet that all buildings had been secured and there was no further threat to the public.

"To God be the Glory. We have been rescued. Over 50 people in my group. No injuries Thank you all for the support and prayers. Thanks You KDF," tweeted a Kenyan businesswoman, Aggie Asiimwe Konde. KDF stands for the Kenya Defense Forces.

Authorities did not say how many attackers there were—or what happened to them—though Kenya's Citizen TV aired security-camera footage that showed at least four heavily armed men in dark-colored, paramilitary-style gear.

A police officer who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to talk to the media said bodies were seen in restaurants downstairs and in offices upstairs, but "there was no time to count the dead."

Iran satellite fails to reach orbit in US-criticized launch

TEHRAN, Iran (AP)—An Iranian satellite-carrying rocket blasted off into space Tuesday, but scientists failed to put the device into orbit in a launch criticized by the United States as helping the Islamic Republic further develop its ballistic missile program.

After the launch, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo repeated his allegation that Iran's space program could help it develop a missile capable of carrying a nuclear weapon to the mainland U.S., criticism that comes amid the Trump administration's maximalist approach against Tehran after withdrawing from the nuclear deal.

Iran, which long has said it does not seek nuclear weapons, maintains its satellite launches and rocket tests do not have a military component. Tehran also says they don't violate a United Nations resolution that only "called upon" it not to conduct such tests.

The rocket carrying the Payam satellite failed to reach the "necessary speed" in the third stage of its launch, Telecommunications Minister Mohammad Javad Azari Jahromi said.

Jahromi said the rocket had successfully passed its first and second stages before developing problems in the third. That suggests something went wrong after the rocket pushed the satellite out of the Earth's atmosphere. He did not elaborate on what caused the failure, but promised that Iranian scientists would continue their work.

Iran had said that it plans to send two nonmilitary satellites, Payam and Doosti, into orbit. The Payam, which means "message" in Farsi, was an imagery satellite that Iranian officials said would help with farming and other activities.

It's unclear how the failure of the Payam will affect the launch timing for the Doosti, which means "friendship." Jahromi wrote on Twitter that "Doosti is waiting for orbit," without elaborating.

Tuesday's launch took place at Imam Khomeini Space Center in Iran's Semnan province, a facility under the control of the country's Defense Ministry, Jahromi said. Satellite images published last week and first reported by CNN showed activity at the launch site. Given the facility's launching corridor, the satellite likely fell in the Indian Ocean.

Iranian state television aired footage of its reporter narrating the launch of the Simorgh rocket, shouting over its roar that it sent "a message of the pride, self-confidence and willpower of Iranian youth to the world!"

The TV footage shows the rocket becoming just a pinpoint of light in the darkened sky and not the moment of its failure.

The Simorgh, meaning "phoenix" in Farsi, has been used in previous satellite launches. It is larger than an earlier model known as the Safir, or "ambassador," that Iran previously used to launch satellites.

Ahmad Motamedi, the chancellor of Tehran Amirkabir University of Technology, which designed the satellite, told the semi-official Mehr news agency that Jahromi already has ordered them to design another satellite.

Focus

Fight against India joins 2 Kashmir teens in LIFE AND DEATH

AP

In this Dec. 26, 2018, photo, Asim Aijaz prays near the grave of his nephew Saqib Bilal Sheikh, who was 16-years-old when he died in a gunbattle, at martyrs graveyard in Hajin village, north of Srinagar, Indian controlled Kashmir. On a hot day in August, two teenage boys in the Kashmiri town of Hajin, including Saqib, walked away from a local soccer pitch, only to return home months later in body bags. The boys journeyed together from playfield to armed rebellion, joining a nearly three-decade insurgency that is drawing greater numbers of teenage boys and young men as New Delhi cracks down on anti-India protests.

By AIJAZ HUSSAIN
ASSOCIATED PRESS

HAJIN, India (AP)—On a hot day in August, members of a Kashmiri youth soccer team watched their 16-year-old captain, Saqib Bilal Sheikh, and goalkeeper Mudassir Rashid Parray, two years his junior, walk off the field toward a man on a motorcycle. The two teenagers were not seen again until months later, when they were returned to their hometown in body bags.

Dying with his teammate in an 18-hour firefight in December, Mudassir became the youngest militant slain fighting Indian troops in a three-decade insurgency in Kashmir. The rebellion is drawing greater numbers of teenage boys and young men as New Delhi has increased its suppression of protest against Indian rule in the Himalayan region.

Anti-India unrest has been on the rise since a charismatic rebel leader was killed in a 2016 gunbattle with Indian troops in southern Kashmir. Police say since then, hundreds of young Kashmiris have joined rebel groups, leading to a surge in attacks on government troops and pro-India Kashmiri politicians in the region, which is divided between India and Pakistan and claimed by both in its entirety.

Indian authorities have responded by stepping up anti-rebel operations and cracking down on civilian protests, often responding to stone-pelting with live bullets.

"Young people feel frustrated and pushed to the wall," said Khurram Parvez, a program coordinator for the Jammu-Kashmir Coalition of Civil Society. "They feel the only way by which the government of India is going to listen to them is by coming out and joining militancy."

Saqib and Mudassir came from different economic backgrounds, united by their passion for soccer and their hometown, Hajin, which since the 1990s has seen brutal fighting between anti-India rebels and pro-India counterinsurgent groups armed and funded by the Indian military.

The two boys watched as the peaceful summertime street marches that began in Kashmir in 2008 turned into battlegrounds.

Their parents had generally distanced themselves from the civilian uprising against India. But both families described their sons as martyrs, speaking to a common resentment of India in Kashmir as a violent occupying force.

Saqib, who was famous among his friends for appearing as an extra in the Bollywood film "Haider," an adaptation of Shakespeare's "Hamlet" set in Kashmir, grew up in a wealthy farming family, excelled at school and aspired to become an engineer.

From their two-story home in Hajin, Saqib's elder brother, Aqib Bilal, played a video on his phone of his brother using an iron to straighten his thick, black hair. He flipped through one of his brother's notebooks: mathematics exercises, physics notes and poetry.

One couplet, written in Urdu, read, "Everyone should participate in the freedom struggle; everyone's dream is freedom but no one wants to fight and die for it!"

Unlike Saqib, Mudassir was skinny, soft-spoken and shy, and struggled with his studies.

He sometimes took menial jobs to help his sickly parents, younger sister and mentally disabled elder brother, his parents said from their modest home, some 500 meters (yards) away from the Bilals.

"At such a tender age, he was already our family's backbone," Mudassir's father, Abdul Rashid Parray, said as he shuffled kangri, a traditional earthenware firepot filled with embers used in Kashmir to keep warm in the harsh winter months.

"Police snatched my son from us," Mudassir's mother, Fareeda Begum, shouted in tears, surrounded by consoling women.

"He was fated to die on that day," Parray said in response. "Thank God he died as a martyr."

Mudassir's cousin Ahmed, who gave only his middle name, fearing reprisal from the authorities, said police had detained and tortured Mudassir for over two weeks in 2017, listing him as an "over-ground worker," a term Indian government forces use to describe people who actively support rebels.

Police denied detaining Mudassir, saying they only brought him into the station to counsel him as part of what police call a de-radicalization campaign.

"We called Mudassir to dissuade him from participating in protests and stone-pelting," said the area's police chief, Sheikh Zulfkar Azad. "We counseled his father as well. But Mudassir had already been too radicalized."

Conflict observers say that last year's death toll in the insurgency was the highest since 2009, including at least 260 militants, 160 civilians and 150 government forces.

The United Nations has called for an independent international investigation into reports of rape, torture and extrajudicial killings in Kashmir. In a June report, the U.N. particularly criticized Indian troops for firing shotgun pellets at protesters, blinding and injuring hundreds of people, including children.

India's Foreign Ministry dismissed the report as "fallacious."

Kashmir has known little other than conflict since 1947, when India and Pakistan gained independence but were unable to resolve their rival claims on the mountain territory. Since then, the archrivals have fought two wars over those claims.

The Indian side of the territory has seen several uprisings, including the ongoing bloody armed rebellion launched in 1989 to demand independence or a merger with Pakistan. Since then, about 70,000 people—mainly civilians but also soldiers and rebels—have been killed.

India has long treated the Kashmiri struggle for self-determination as Islamabad's proxy war against New Delhi, responding to public protest with disproportionate force, critics say.

The conflict has intensified since Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi came to power in 2014 amid rising attacks by Hindu hard-liners against minorities in the country, further deepening frustration with New Delhi's rule in Muslim-majority Kashmir.

Modi's Hindu nationalist Bharitya Janata Party-led government has toughened its stance against both Pakistan and Kashmiri separatists with policies that experts say are intended to project the BJP as strong and uncompromising.

"This all becomes perversely useful for the BJP in the run-up to elections" due this year, said Paul Staniland, a political science professor focused on South Asia at the University of Chicago.

Amid mounting public defiance against Indian rule in Kashmir—including publicly mourning dead rebels as martyrs, disobeying curfews, producing resistance art and engaging in social media activism—some former federal ministers and Hindu nationalists have questioned Modi's Kashmir policy.

India is holding Kashmir "only by dint of the fact that we have our armed forces there," India's former finance and foreign minister Yashwant Sinha said during a recent panel discussion in New Delhi.

"Unfortunately, Kashmiri body bags and anti-Pakistan rhetoric sells well in India for gaining votes," said Parvez, the human rights activist. "That's exactly what Modi's party is doing."

Modi's policies have also had the unintended consequence of strengthening the resolve of those fighting for an end to India's rule in Kashmir.

"How can any Kashmiri ever back India?" said Ali Mohammed, one of the Parrays' neighbors. "Supporting India is like supporting soldiers killing and blinding children and destroying our homes. Supporting India is just inhumane."

During armed confrontations, Indian soldiers are often engaged on two fronts. Increasingly, when soldiers approach suspected rebel hideouts, civilians barrage troops with stones while shouting anti-India slogans and sheltering the militants, even at the expense of their own lives. In the last two years alone, more than 120 civilians were killed and hundreds wounded during such confrontations.

Environment

AP

In this June 13, 2017, file photo, the parents of this 7-week old red wolf pup keep an eye on their offspring at the Museum of Life and Science in Durham, N.C. A pack of wild canines found frolicking near the beaches of the Texas Gulf Coast have led to the discovery that red wolves, or at least an animal closely aligned with them, are enduring in secluded parts of the Southeast nearly 40 years after the animal was thought to have become extinct in the wild.

DNA of wolf declared extinct in wild lives on in Texas pack

By DAVID WARREN
ASSOCIATED PRESS

DALLAS (AP)—Researchers say a pack of wild canines found frolicking near the beaches of the Texas Gulf Coast carries a substantial amount of red wolf genes, a surprising discovery because the animal was declared extinct in the wild nearly 40 years ago.

The finding has led wildlife biologists and others to develop a new understanding that the red wolf DNA is remarkably resilient after decades of human hunting, loss of habitat and other factors had led the animal to near decimation.

"Overall, it's incredibly rare to rediscover animals in a region where they were thought to be extinct and it's even more exciting to show that a piece of an endangered genome has been preserved in the wild," said Elizabeth Heppenheimer, a Princeton University biologist involved in the research on the pack found on Galveston Island in Texas. The work of the Princeton team was published in the scientific journal Genes.

The genetic analysis found that the Galveston canines appear to be a hybrid of red wolf and coyote, but Heppenheimer cautions that without additional testing, it's difficult to label the animal.

Ron Sutherland, a North Carolina-based conservation scientist with the Wildlands Network, said it's exciting to have found "this unique and fascinating medium-sized wolf." The survival of the red wolf genes "without much help from us for the last 40 years is wonderful news," said Sutherland, who was not involved in the Princeton study.

The discovery coincides with similar DNA findings in wild canines in southwestern Louisiana and bolsters the hopes of conservationists dismayed by the dwindling number of red wolves in North Carolina that comprised the only known pack in the wild.

The red wolf, which tops out at about 80 pounds (49 kilograms), was once common across a vast region extending from Texas to the south, into the Southeast and up into the Northeast. It was federally classified as endangered in 1967 and declared extinct in the wild in 1980. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in the 1970s captured a remnant population in Texas and Louisiana that eventually led to a successful captive breeding program. Those canines in 1986 became part of the experimental wild population in North Carolina. That group has been declining since peaking at an estimated 120 to 130 wolves in 2006. A federal report in April said only about 40 remained.

An additional 200 red wolves live in zoos and wildlife facilities as part of captive breeding programs.

A federal judge in November sided with environmental groups that argued in a lawsuit that efforts by federal authorities to shrink the territory of the wild group in North Carolina were a violation of law. The judge ruled U.S. Fish and Wildlife also violated the Endangered Species Act by authorizing private landowners to kill the canine predators even if they weren't threatening humans, livestock or pets.

The debate over red wolf protections could take on new dimensions with the discovery on Galveston.

Sutherland said the Galveston canines have effectively quashed a decades-old impression that red wolves were a feckless predator overwhelmed by the numerical superiority of coyotes. He adds that the Galveston group has DNA that can't be found in the animal's captive population.

"From a practical conservation biology standpoint, these animals have special DNA and they deserve to be protected," he said, explaining that conservation easements that restrict development along parts of the Gulf Coast are an essential first step.

A spokesman for U.S. Fish and Wildlife said the agency is unable to comment during the partial government shutdown. The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department said in a statement that the Galveston discovery is "interesting," but "we do not anticipate any regulatory changes or implications in Texas at this time."

Kim Wheeler, executive director of the North Carolina-based Red Wolf Coalition, cautioned that further study of the Galveston pack is needed.

"We can get excited, but in my mind, we really need to let science do its due diligence to determine what this animal is," she said, noting that red wolves can evoke strong feelings in people with livestock or who have other concerns with their predatory nature.

Conservationists, meanwhile, say policymakers need to have a greater appreciation for hybrid animals. When the Endangered Species Act was implemented in the 1970s, conventional wisdom was that hybridization between species — such as the wolf and coyote — was rare and to be avoided. But experts say the thinking on that has changed.

Flock party for rare bird

By LOUIS SAHAGUN
LOS ANGELES TIMES

LOS ANGELES—Hundreds of hard-core birders from across the nation have been flocking to South Los Angeles this week, hoping to catch a glimpse of a rare avian that wandered in from Siberia and inexplicably chose to hunker down within a hedge just south of the 10 Freeway.

The foreign visitor — or "vagrant," as bird-watchers say — became an instant celebrity five days ago, when a sharp-eyed librarian in Jefferson Park identified it as a red-flanked bluetail.

Ever since then, fans toting binoculars have crowded onto the grounds of UCLA's William Andrews Clark Memorial Library to marvel at the so-called megatick — a species so rare that most birders may never get the opportunity to "tick" it off their life's list of hoped-for sightings in the U.S.

Friday morning, scores of bird-lovers streamed through the library's gates and began a frenzied search for the avian superstar.

It didn't take long for Jeff Bray, 40, of Irvine to spot the treasure he was hunting for: a brownish ball of feathers roughly the size of a computer mouse who sported a white eye ring, orange sides and a bright blue tail.

"I saw it for a few seconds," Bray said with a smile. "It looked like a bird hopping around in the bushes. Very cool."

TNS

Kimball Garrett, left, the ornithology collections manager at the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County confirmed the sighting of a rare red-flanked bluetail by Rebecca Marschall, right, on the grounds of the William Andrews Clark Memorial Library in Los Angeles, on Friday, January 11, 2019.

This is the first recorded instance of a red-flanked bluetail on California's mainland, said Kimball Garrett, manager of the ornithology collection at the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County. It is believed to be the bird's eighth documented visit to the North American continent.

The bluetail's native habitat ranges from coniferous forests in northern Asia, west through Russia to Finland. It typically winters in southeast Asia.

No other extremely rare bird, some say, has made this much commotion since an odd duck known as a Baikal teal blew into the Rocky Mountain village of Kittredge, Colo., in 1993 and planted itself outside the picture window of Bear Creek Tavern.

Such unexpected appearances are known to excite and attract armies of so-called twitchers — eager bird aficionados who will travel great distances at huge expense just to ogle a unique species for the first time.

On Friday, Linda Pitman, 65, of Wilton, Calif., and her friend, Frances Oliver, 60, of Lodi got close enough to snap a few photos worth showing off to friends.

Unfortunately, the bird was so skittish that most of the cameras on hand captured only a blob in the branches.

"Think of us as crazy old ladies who flew all the way down here through the fog along Interstate 5 just to get a good look at a bird," Pitman said.

"I saw it for about five seconds," Oliver added. "I'd seen one before in Thailand."

As she spoke, someone muttered, "Up there!" Suddenly, dozens of high-end binoculars, cameras and spotting scopes were trained on — as one of them put it — "a little brown job" flitting in the highest branches of a magnolia tree.

Moments later, someone else sighed, "Never mind," and all that optical firepower lowered in unison.

Life & Style

REVIEW:

The underwhelming rollercoaster of 'Glass'

AP

Anya Taylor-Joy, from left, Sarah Paulson, James McAvoy, Bruce Willis and Samuel L. Jackson attend the premiere of "Glass" at the SVA Theatre on Tuesday, Jan. 15, 2019, in New York.

Samuel L. Jackson's Elijah Price, or Mr. Glass, as he prefers to be called, was by far the most compelling part of M. Night Shyamalan's slow-burn comic book send-up "Unbreakable." A brilliant, tortured manipulator and superhero enthusiast suffering from osteogenesis imperfecta (i.e. brittle bone disease), Glass is that kind of charismatic supervillain that you can't get enough of.

Nineteen years is certainly a long time to wait for more Mr. Glass. But Shyamalan, even after naming this long-gestating film after Jackson's character, decides to withhold him from the audience even longer. Yes, he makes Mr. Glass a highly sedated vegetable who gets to do little more thank blink and intensely stare at the camera for what feels like more than half of the movie.

It's one of the many ways in which "Glass ," which seems to delight in building up anticipation only to pull the rug out from under you, manages to both frustrate and underwhelm. I'm sure it's some kind of meta-commentary on the futility of serialized storytelling, the contrivances and deification of comic book culture and easily malleable audience expectations, but in execution it mostly feels like a tub full of half-baked ideas that never really coalesce into something exciting, meaningful or all that memorable.

"Glass" definitely doesn't care to help if you haven't seen "Unbreakable" or "Split," either. It just dives right in with little exposition. We see Bruce Willis's David Dunn taking a couple of teen pranksters to task. Then it jumps to James McAvoy's multiple personalities, who've decided to take four teenage cheerleaders hostage because they're "impure" and "need to be punished."

David, who is working alongside his now-grown son Joseph (Spencer Treat Clark, the same actor from "Unbreakable," which is actually a nice touch), has been trying to find the missing cheerleaders. Joseph warns him to be careful, because David has also been branded a public nuisance for all of his would-be good deeds that have left criminals and victims injured and looking for someone to sue. If you're thinking, wait, isn't this sort of the plot of "Incredibles," just wait because it even brushes up against some "Incredibles 2" themes, intentionally or not.

David and the "Horde" (the term used to describe the collective of all of McAvoy's personalities, which range from a 9-year-old boy and an older British woman, to a terrifying flesh-eating creature called "The Beast") meet and low-budget fight a bit, but are interrupted by the authorities and Sarah Paulson's Dr. Ellie Staple who take them to the psychiatric hospital where Price is.

Dr. Staple explains with oozing condescension that she specializes in treating those afflicted by delusions of grandeur—aka, those who think they have superpowers. She says their abilities and their weaknesses are all in the mind, and can be explained away by science and childhood traumas. This little group therapy session in a bubblegum pink room is one of the more compelling parts, and it seems like the film is gleefully destroying the superhero origin story myth, sending its main characters into a spiral of doubt.

But don't get too attached to this, or any other path Shyamalan seems to be taking us down, because he will change course, backtrack and laugh at you for getting too committed to one narrative (while really going all in on some questionable ones, like having the Horde's sole surviving captive from "Split," Casey (Anya Taylor-Joy), come back as a sort of Stockholm Syndrome empathy machine to worry about him).

Mr. Glass does emerge from his vegetative state, eventually, and kicks the movie into gear as only Jackson can do. McAvoy is once again giving his all to all the characters, and watching him shift between them is still enjoyable, but perhaps not worth all the screen time it gets. Willis barely gets anything to do at all. But for all the hype behind these three characters meeting, and the years it took to get it off the ground, "Glass" is one big anti-climax.

"Glass," a Universal Pictures release, is rated PG-13 by the Motion Picture Association of America for "violence including some bloody images, thematic elements, and language." Running time: 129 minutes. *(AP)* ★★☆☆

Netflix raising prices for 58M US subscribers as costs rise

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) —Netflix is raising its U.S. prices by 13 to 18 percent, its biggest increase since the company launched its video streaming service 12 years ago.

Its most popular plan will see the largest hike, to $13 per month from $11. That option offers high-definition streaming on up to two different internet-connected devices simultaneously. Even at the higher price, that plan is still a few dollars cheaper than HBO, whose streaming service charges $15 per month.

The extra cash will help to pay for Netflix's huge investment in original shows and films and finance the heavy debt it has assumed to ward off rivals such as Amazon, Disney and AT&T.

While subscribers might bemoan a bigger monthly bill, Wall Street cheered, sending Netflix's shares up 6.5 percent Tuesday.

This marks the fourth time that Netflix has raised its U.S. prices; the last hike came in late 2017. But this is the first time that higher prices will hit all 58 million U.S. subscribers, the number Netflix reported at the end of September.

Previously, Netflix had continued to offer a basic, $8-a-month streaming plan while raising rates on more comprehensive plans with better video quality and options to watch simultaneously on different devices.

This time, the price for the cheapest plan is going up to $9 per month. A premium plan offering ultra-high definition will jump to $16 per month from $14.

The new prices will immediately affect all new subscribers and then roll out to existing customers during the next three months. Customers in about 40 Latin America countries where Netflix bills in U.S. currency will also be affected, excepting key international markets such as Mexico and Brazil.

Netflix had nearly 79 million subscribers outside the U.S. as of September.

Higher prices could alienate subscribers and possibly even trigger a wave of cancelations. For instance, Netflix faced a huge backlash in 2011 when it unbundled video streaming from its older DVD-by-mail service, resulting in a 60 percent price increase for subscribers who wanted to keep both plans. Netflix lost 600,000 subscribers — about 2 percent of its total customers at the time — after that switch.

"This is a more aggressive move than (investors) were expecting," said Moody's analyst Neil Begley said. "It shows Netflix is pretty confident that is still has some pricing power in the U.S."

That confidence flows from the programming line-up that Netflix has built since it began focusing on exclusive shows five years ago. The acclaimed hits have included "House of Cards," "Orange Is The New Black," "Stranger Things," "The Crown" and, most recently, the film "Bird Box."

"We change pricing from time to time as we continue investing in great entertainment and improving the overall Netflix experience," the company said in a statement.

Consumers also have an increasing array of other streaming options.

Amazon offers a streaming service as part of its Prime shipping program for $13 per month, or $120 for an annual membership. Hulu sells an ad-free service for $12 per month. AT&T's WarnerMedia unit plans a broader streaming service this year centered on HBO. Walt Disney is gearing up to launch a streaming channel this year.

With Apple also widely expected to join the video-streaming fray, the competition for programming is enabling top directors, writers and actors to charge more for their talents. That has intensified financial pressure on Netflix, which hasn't been bringing in enough money to pay for all its programming and other business expenses.

Sofia Coppola, Bill Murray to reunite for 'On the Rocks'

NEW YORK (AP)—Sofia Coppola and Bill Murray will reunite 16 years after the Oscar-winning "Lost in Translation" in the splashiest feature film yet announced by Apple.

A24 said Tuesday that Coppola's "On the Rocks" will be the indie studio's first project under its joint deal with Apple, which is pushing into original content. The New York-set film stars Rashida Jones as a young mother who reconnects with her larger-than-life father, to be played by Murray.

"Lost in Translation" earned Coppola an Oscar for best screenplay and numerous nominations including Murray for best actor. Coppola also directed Murray in the Netflix holiday special "A Very Murray Christmas."

Apple and A24, the boutique studio behind films like "Moonlight" and "Lady Bird," last November signed a multi-year production deal. Neither company has yet said if their films together with have traditional theatrical releases or debut directly on Apple's planned streaming platform. The iPhone-maker has previously acquired two documentaries: "The Elephant Queen" and "Wolfwakers."

Production on "On the Rocks," which Coppola also wrote, will begin this spring in New York.

Trump's burger-fest brings roasting from late-night TV hosts

WASHINGTON (AP)— Junk food for athletes? President Donald Trump's offer of greasy burgers and fries to the college football champion Clemson Tigers brought a roasting from late-night TV hosts.

Trump, a fast-food lover, said he paid for the meal himself because of the partial government shutdown, which has led to furloughs among federal workers, including at the White House.

Otherwise, he joked, first lady Melania Trump and Karen Pence, Vice President Mike Pence's wife, would be making salads.

"I had a choice. Do we have no food for you, because we have a shutdown?" Trump told the team gathered Monday in the White House East Room. "Or do we give you some little quick salads that the first lady will make, along with, along with the second lady. They'll make some salads. And I said, 'You guys aren't into salads.'"

"Or do I go out ... do I go out and send out for about 1,000 hamburgers, Big Macs," Trump said.

AP

President Donald Trump talks to the media about the table full of fast food in the State Dining Room of the White House in Washington, Monday, Jan. 14, 2019, for the reception for the Clemson Tigers.

Late-night TV hosts ridiculed the president, with NBC's Seth Meyers joking, in a Trumpian voice: "Normally I would have a salad for dinner on Monday, but they told me they only eat every fast food."

Stephen Colbert of CBS asked whether Trump was "just projecting your favorite foods onto them."

The fast-food feast apparently startled some of the players. Clemson offensive lineman Matt Bockhorst tweeted "I mean you're not just gonna NOT eat the Big Macs stacked in a pile right?"

Some Twitter users criticized the president for serving such food to college athletes, whose diets are strictly controlled by nutritionists. However, others tweeted they thought the menu was just right for college students.

Trump appeared to defend his decision Tuesday in a tweet about how quickly the food was eaten.

"Great being with the National Champion Clemson Tigers last night at the White House. Because of the Shutdown I served them massive amounts of Fast Food (I paid), over 1000 hamberders etc. Within one hour, it was all gone. Great guys and big eaters!" he wrote.

Silver trays held stacks of wrapped burgers from Wendy's. Also on offer were boxed burgers from McDonald's, including Big Macs. White House cups bearing the presidential seal held the fries.

Pizzas, some topped with olives and tomatoes, also were on the menu. Silver bowls held the condiments, and stacks of white plates sat nearby. Several young men were spotted eating multiple burgers at the standup tables dotting the East Room.

"We ordered American fast food, paid for by me. Lots of hamburgers, lots of pizza," he said. "We have some very large people that like eating, so I think we're going to have a little fun."

Satisfaction: Rolling Stones to headline 50th Jazz Fest

NEW ORLEANS (AP)— The New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival has got satisfaction: The Rolling Stones are among the headliners for the 50th anniversary festival.

Organizers on Tuesday confirmed reports that the Rock and Roll Hall of Famers will play. Also headlining the 8-day event, which runs April 25-28 and May 2-5, are Katy Perry, the Dave Matthews Band, Al Green, Pitbull, Santana, Jerry Lee Lewis, Aaron Neville and gospel great Shirley Caesar.

"Fifty years is very rare and to be here, still, just as strong, just as relevant is amazing," festival producer Quint Davis said.

"For the Rolling Stones and Katy Perry—two of the most highly produced artists—to want to come play our festival, held in a tent, during the day with the scent of BBQ and oyster po-boys wafting over the field, that's just incredible."

Perry is scheduled to perform April 27, the first Saturday, while the Stones will take over the festival's largest stage Thursday, May 2.

Seeing the Stones' performance will require a special ticket good only for that day. Cost? $185.

Tickets go on a pre-sale Thursday for Louisiana residents only, to buy tickets for the Rolling Stones' date. Up to two tickets can be purchased on the Plaza level of the Superdome from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Tickets go on sale Friday for the entire festival at 10 a.m. in New Orleans or at www.nojazzfest.com or www.ticketmaster.com or by calling 1-800-745-3000.

For the first time, the festival's 11 other stages will go dark when Jagger and company hit the stage.

"Even though it's going to be a full fest day, with performances on all 12 stages, we don't want the stages where the Stones aren't performing to compete for an audience," Davis said. "We don't want the other stages to not have any people there, so we're gonna shut them down about an hour before the Stones perform, encourage them to get something to eat, to get a good spot and enjoy the show."

Rihanna sues father over use of their last name for business

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Rihanna is suing her father over his use of their last name for a business.

In the lawsuit filed Tuesday in federal court in Los Angeles, Rihanna, whose full name is Robyn Rihanna Fenty, says that her father, Ronald Fenty, and his partner have violated her trademark and falsely suggested that their business, Fenty Entertainment, is affiliated with her.

The 30-year-old singer says in the lawsuit that she has used the name for her cosmetics brand and other businesses since 2012.

Fenty Entertainment, which advertises itself as a talent and production company, was founded in 2017.

The lawsuit asks the court to order Ronald Fenty to stop using the brand name, and it seeks damages to be determined later.

An email sent to Fenty Entertainment seeking comment wasn't immediately returned.

Bruce Springsteen surprises Irish pub patrons in Boston

BOSTON (AP) — Bruce Springsteen made an unexpected visit to a Boston pub last week.

Tommy McCarthy, owner of The Bebop, says Springsteen walked into the bar with his wife and another woman to spend some time listening to a local performer playing Friday evening. McCarthy tells The Boston Globe that Springsteen enjoyed the music and had a few drinks before he went on his way.

McCarthy says the Boss told him he'd like to stop by again sometime.

It was unclear why Springsteen was in Boston, although his son once attended Boston College.

The Bebop is close to Berklee College of Music and McCarthy says Springsteen's visit was "pretty amazing."

Bargain hunter's bragging tries her friend's patience

DEAR ABBY: I have a friend I'll call Rose who likes to brag about how cheap she is. Sometimes when we're talking, she will interrupt me and ask, "How do you like my pants? I got them for a dollar at a yard sale." Or she'll say, "I got them for free."

Rose likes to draw attention to herself every time she wears something new by asking how I like it. Then she will tell me where she got it and how much it cost. I couldn't be less interested, and I'm tired of hearing about her tacky, cheap clothes.

We go to a water aerobics class together, and she will interrupt the class to ask how they like her "sexy" bathing suit. Abby, Rose is in her 70s and not sexy. I like her as a friend, but I am about ready to tell her to shut up! I don't want to be mean. How can I get across that I don't want to hear about her clothes?

TIRED OF THE DISCOUNT FASHION SHOW

DEAR TIRED: If you say nothing, "Second Hand Rose" will continue her line of chatter. Try this: Say, "Rose, honey, you know how much I like you, but I wish you would stop talking about your wardrobe with me. You are interesting on so many other levels, and I'm just not into fashion." Then cross your fingers and hope your friend gets the message.

DEAR ABBY: Our friend's adult daughter has been dating a guy my friend does not approve of for about three years. The daughter moved in with him, and afterward one evening, told my husband and me. We are friends of her mom, but we agreed to say nothing because we didn't want to get in the middle, and it wasn't our news to tell.

The daughter recently told her mother (our friend) that she and the guy are living together and that we knew. Now her mom is no longer talking to us or to her daughter. Is there a way we could have handled it differently? Is there any way I can repair the situation?

MISSING OUR BESTIE

DEAR MISSING: Your friend's daughter may be an adult chronologically, but she doesn't act like one. She should not have kept her living arrangement from her mother and shouldn't have asked you to keep the secret. Then she compounded it by betraying you.

In hindsight, you should have told the daughter immediately that the way to keep a secret is to tell NO ONE, especially a close friend of her mother's, and encouraged her to level with her mom. And as to how to repair the breach—all you can do is continue apologizing and hope that eventually your friend's fury will dissipate.

DEAR ABBY: I have a delicate problem with my boss at work. He seems to have a problem with constantly touching his crotch area (scratching, holding or laying a hand on it). I am not sure if it is a nervous thing or a problem. How should I address this without making matters worse for either myself or him?

SARAH IN SOUTH CAROLINA

DEAR SARAH: I wish you had mentioned whether other employees also see him do this. If they do and any of them are male, it might be less embarrassing for your boss if that employee would mention to him that others are noticing. However, if you are the only employee who sees him, then the most tactful way to handle it would be to keep your gaze resolutely above his beltline.

For everything you need to know about wedding planning, order "How to Have a Lovely Wedding." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Wedding Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

DEAR ABBY

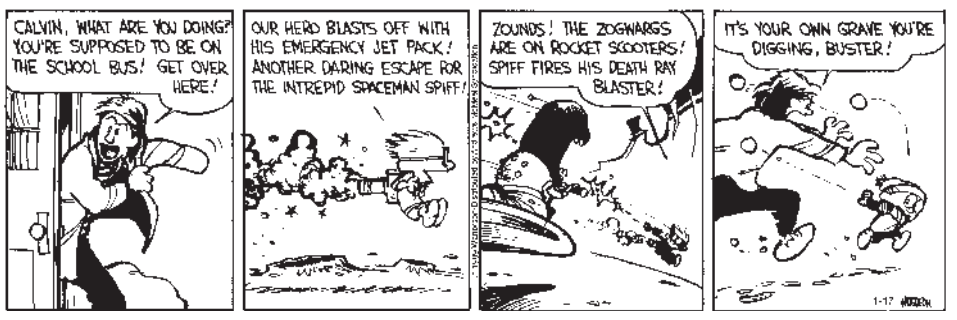
By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

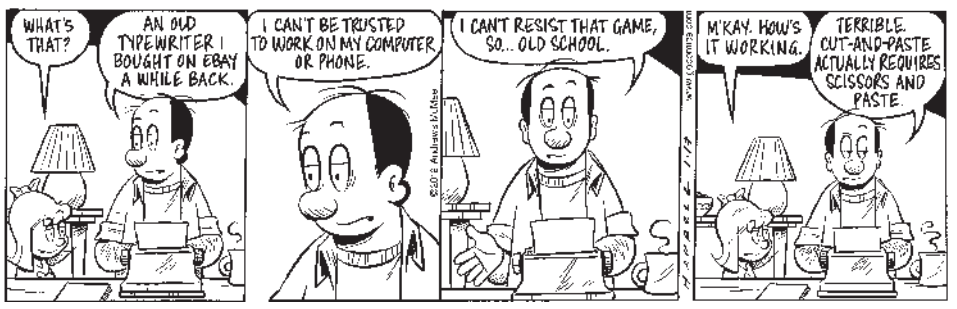

CALVIN, WHAT ARE YOU DOING? YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE ON THE SCHOOL BUS! GET OVER HERE!
OUR HERO BLASTS OFF WITH HIS EMERGENCY JET PACK! ANOTHER DARING ESCAPE FOR THE INTREPID SPACEMAN SPIFF!
ZOUNDS! THE ZOGWARGS ARE ON ROCKET SCOOTERS! SPIFF FIRES HIS DEATH RAY BLASTER!
IT'S YOUR OWN GRAVE YOU'RE DIGGING, BUSTER!

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


WHAT'S THAT?
AN OLD TYPEWRITER I BOUGHT ON EBAY A WHILE BACK.
I CAN'T BE TRUSTED TO WORK ON MY COMPUTER OR PHONE.
I CAN'T RESIST THAT GAME, SO... OLD SCHOOL.
M'KAY. HOW'S IT WORKING.
TERRIBLE. CUT-AND-PASTE ACTUALLY REQUIRES SCISSORS AND PASTE.

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Repast
5 "Ben- —"
8 Lawman Wyatt
12 "Frozen" snow queen
13 "Right you —!"
14 Computer brand
15 Slightly
16 Actress Long
17 Hindu royal
18 Tidy up
20 Toto, to Dorothy
22 Peyton's brother
23 Commonest English word
24 Easter entrees
27 Vinegar variety
32 X-ray's cousin
33 Chopper
34 Hostel
35 "Becoming" author Obama
38 Read quickly
39 Knock
40 Wildebeest
42 "Yippee!"
45 Held up
49 "Mamma Mia" group
50 Gardner of Hollywood
52 Actress Kate
53 Fibs
54 Diarist Anaïs
55 Footnote abbr.
56 Minus
57 Young fox
58 Till bills

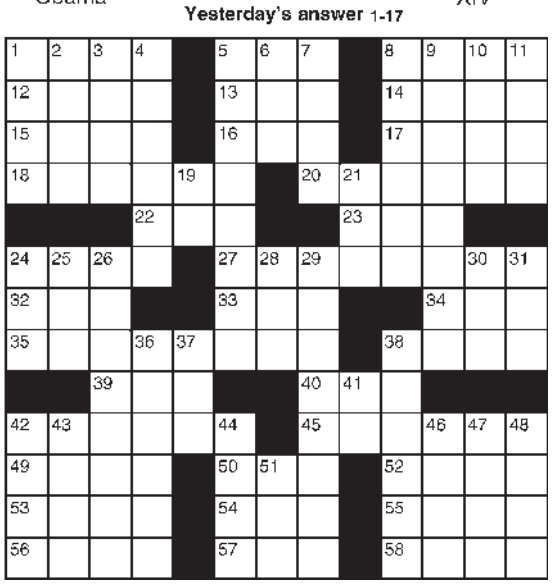
DOWN

1 Intend
2 North Sea feeder
3 Largest continent
4 Coffee bar orders
5 Carthaginian general
6 Swiss canton
7 Harvest
8 Sultry singer Kitt
9 Campus figure
10 Gambling mecca
11 Bluenose
19 Chicago transport
21 UFO crew
24 "Let me think ..."
25 "Exodus" hero
26 Germs
28 Rocker Rose
29 "Shampoo" Oscar winner
30 — pickle
31 Blitzer's channel
36 Badger
37 Clean-air org.
38 Hand in
41 "Forget it!"
42 Corridor
43 Theater award
44 Tug
46 Innocent one
47 Ms. Brockovich
48 June honorees
51 Half of XIV

Solution time: 24 mins.

N	A	D	A	■	C	C	B	■	S	A	M	E
E	_	A	L	■	I	C	Y	■	C	M	O	N
T	E	M	P	L	A	T	E	■	A	B	E	T
S	C	E	P	I	A	■	■	S	T	R	U	T	S
■	■	■	N	O	E	_	■	I	S	L	■	■
T	R	U	F	■	T	A	P	F	■	A	P	F
I	N	N	■	F	A	I	L	S	■	T	O	E
L	S	D	■	E	T	R	E	■	P	E	E	K
■	■	■	U	R	L	■	S	A	■	E	■	■
H	I	L	E	I	S	■	■	_	E	G	O	S
E	W	A	N	■	E	S	C	A	L	A	T	E
M	A	T	T	■	A	C	H	■	E	P	I	C
A	S	C	A	■	L	I	C	■	R	C	S	T

Yesterday's answer 1-17



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Zooey Deschanel, 39; Jim Carrey, 57; Steve Harvey, 62; Betty White, 97.

Happy Birthday: Be careful what you sign up for this year. Something you thought would be advantageous will turn out to be a burden. Added responsibilities will be tiring but will also bring you joy. Make the most out of whatever situation you face. Accept change, but don't create it. Doing your best will turn out better than trying to do the most. Your numbers are 6, 11, 19, 27, 35, 39, 46.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* Stay focused on personal investments, legal documents and health issues. If someone tries to distract you or pressure you into taking on responsibilities that don't belong to you, be polite and decline. A financial gain looks promising. Romance is encouraged. ✪✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* Stick to your game plan, and don't budge regardless of the emotional tactics someone uses to get you to donate time, money or services to a project you know little about. A business model you set up will pay off. ✪✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Emotions will rise to the surface when dealing with matters concerning someone you love. Do your part to offer good advice and to deter excessive or indulgent behavior. Sticking to a plan or setting up rules is favored. ✪✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* Try a unique approach when dealing with a personal relationship. Taking the time to find out what someone you love likes or what would lift his or her spirits will bring you closer together and help you avoid an emotional setback. ✪✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Personal change will make you feel good, but don't overspend. Set a budget and figure out what you can do that will help you build confidence. Physical activities, travel and spending time with someone you love are favored. ✪✪✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* Getting involved in events that include people you work alongside or the children in your life will be revealing. An emotional issue that surfaces will be based on false information. Find out the truth before you take action. ✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Don't jump to conclusions, or you will end up getting into an argument. Personal growth, improved health and nurturing important relationships will be what count in the end. Avoid making unnecessary changes at home. Accept the inevitable and move on. ✪✪✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Interact with people who have something to contribute. Learn from what you observe and hear, but when it comes to making adjustments, do what fits your lifestyle, not what pleases someone else. Happiness begins by being true to your needs. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* Make changes to the way you live. Don't ask for help; do the work yourself so you won't feel indebted to others. Don't let a mistake cost you or keep you from achieving your goals. ✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

COPYRIGHT 2007 UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Stick to the truth, and ask questions if someone is evasive. Getting the facts will make a difference to the outcome of a situation involving other people. Don't make promises before you know what's expected of you. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* You'll come up with an interesting idea that can turn into a profitable venture. A home-based business or a skill or talent you have can be updated and adapted to market trends. Romance will bring you closer to someone you love. ✪✪✪✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Truth matters. If you don't mean it, don't say it. Stick to people and organizations you feel comfortable dealing with, or choose to work alone. Problems while traveling or dealing with a friend or relative are likely. ✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are entertaining, original and convincing. You are passionate and spirited.

To submit astrological questions to the "Dear Eugenia" column, visit Eugenialast.com, or join Eugenia on Twitter/Facebook/LinkedIn.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

	5			2	4		1	
		2				7		
			5		6			
6		4				2		
8								7
		1				3		6
			8		5			
		9				6		
	7		9	6			4	

Difficulty Level ★★★ 1/17

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Last Friday's Answer

8	3	4	2	1	5	9	6	7
7	6	2	9	3	8	1	5	4
5	9	1	7	6	4	3	8	2
4	1	3	6	8	9	2	7	5
2	8	7	4	5	3	6	1	9
6	5	9	1	7	2	8	4	3
3	7	5	8	9	1	4	2	6
9	2	8	5	4	6	7	3	1
1	4	6	3	2	7	5	9	8

Difficulty Level ★★★ 1/16

©2012 Conceptis Puzzles, Dist. by King Features Syndicate, Inc.

WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

CHIROGRAPHY — Solution: 11 letters

C	T	Y	P	E	N	M	A	N	S	H	I	P	B	A
A	I	K	R	A	M	L	A	I	C	N	U	P	E	D
S	R	L	A	B	J	A	D	U	H	N	R	H	N	N
C	A	A	A	N	N	Ⓜ	Ⓡ	Ⓐ	A	E	L	O	E	U
I	Y	I	M	T	J	S	D	I	D	F	I	E	D	T
H	H	S	S	A	I	I	D	N	O	T	U	N	I	O
P	P	R	L	V	I	A	E	N	A	M	E	I	C	R
Y	A	E	E	W	K	C	T	C	R	M	X	C	T	E
L	R	V	D	K	S	N	I	O	P	C	U	I	I	D
G	G	O	A	A	E	N	F	I	A	S	L	A	O	N
O	I	R	C	I	U	I	R	P	T	L	R	N	N	E
R	L	T	C	M	E	I	L	Y	T	A	I	D	A	C
E	L	N	M	N	C	I	L	E	E	N	T	I	L	S
I	A	O	U	A	N	U	X	I	R	T	N	V	G	E
H	C	C	L	E	S	T	L	A	N	O	G	A	I	D

© 2018 Andrews McMeel Syndication www.wonderword.com 1/17

Abjad, Akkadian, Ancient, Aramaic, Arm, Ascender, Benedictional, Cadels, Calligraphy, Cap Line, Communication, Controversial, Cuneiform, Cursive, Descender, Diagonal, Diva, Empirical, Font, Hieroglyphics, Italic, Kanji, Luxeuil, Mark, Pattern, Penmanship, Phoenician, Rotunda, Slant, Stylus, Text, Type, Uncial

Yesterday's Answer: Sideways

The NEW **Volume 55** can be purchased online at: www.WonderWordBooks.com, or call 1-800-642-6480.

CLASSIFIED ADS

B&L CORPORATION dba BL MACHINE SHOP
JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT
(3) MACHINIST
At least have 3 years experience in Machining Job. Can operate all kinds of Industrial machines. Can Fabricate and Modify parts metal and Non Metal Have knowledge in reconditioning engine block.
Contact Person: Liberty Sayson
Contact No. 235-2567

(4) CEMENT LABORER
Cement handling equipment
Experience preferred.
Will train motivated individuals.
Wages - $10.00 per hour
Apply in person at
Hanson Micronesia, Cement Inc.
Tel: 670 322-3333

FOR IMMEDIATE HIRING
(1) ACCOUNTANT
We offer good pay and benefits package
Please call 287-3903 or 287-3904

David M. Deleon Guerrero
P.O. Box 503043
Saipan, MP 96950
Telephone No. (670) 789-8394

PRO SE

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

IN RE THE MATTER OF THE APPOINTMENT OF THE GUARDIAN OF THE ESTATE OF: C. T. R. DLG. & D. Jr. R. DLG. Minor Children by David Masga Deleon Guerrero Petitioner : FCD GU CIVIL ACTION NO. 18-0240 : NOTICE HEARING

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that a Petition for Appointment of Guardian for the estate of the above-named minor children by David Masga Deleon Guerrero, Petitioner, was filed with the above-entitled Honorable Court.

A HEARING of said petition for Guardianship will held at the above-entitled Honorable Court at Superior Court before the Associate Judge Teresa Kim-Tenorio on the 25th day of February, 2019 at 9:00 a.m. on the 2nd Floor of the Marianas Business Plaza.

Patrick V. Diaz
Clerk of Court
By: /s/ Deputy Clerk of Court

DRIVE SOBER OR GET PULLED OVER

VEHICLES FOR BID
"AS IS"

2005 NISSAN ALTIMA
2018 TOYOTA YARIS

Last day for bidding is January 31, 2019 at 3:00PM. For more information, please call Loans Department at 235-6260 ext. 123 or 124. The Bank reserves the right to refuse any and all bids.

VEHICLES FOR SALE
"AS IS"

2016 HYUNDAI ACCENT
2017 TOYOTA TACOMA 4X4

Financing available, see staff at Loans Department for details.

Bank of Saipan
Marianas Pride

Legislative Bureau
NORTHERN MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATURE
P.O. BOX 500586, SAIPAN, MP 96950

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Examination Announcement Number: LB-JVA-19-001 **Position: Legislative Assistant**
PL-UNGRADED: $1,148.36 B/W **Opening Date: January 17, 2019**
Closing Date: February 07, 2019

The salary will be determined by the qualification of the appointee
Location: Honorable Jesus P. Mafnas Memorial Building (CNMI Legislature), Capitol Hill, Saipan
General Duties:

- Drafts legislative documents including but not limited to resolutions, committee reports, and letters, as requested by the Chairperson of the Committee to which he or she is assigned to;
- Attends legislative session and committee meetings as requested by the Chairperson of his or her assigned committee;
- Performs investigative and legislative research and analysis;
- Prepares reports and studies including preparation of letters, legislation, and related documents as requested by members of his or her assigned respective legislative house;
- Maintains a reasonable record of all tasks assigned by his or her immediate supervisor Chairperson of the Committee or other members of his or her assigned respective legislative house and such record is subject to review upon request; and
- Performs other duties as assigned.

Qualifications and Requirements:

- Possess four years relevant work experience or a minimum of an AA or AS degree or higher from a United States accredited institution of higher education with one year of legislative work experience;
- Possess ample knowledge of the legislative process;
- Excellent research, analytical, and strong writing skills; and
- Ability to produce results within limited time frames and work under pressure on a daily basis; and
- Undergo a pre-employment drug test.

Education and training claimed under item 19(A) through 19(F) of the Application for Employment must be substantiated by a copy of an official diploma and/or certificate. **Failure to provide the required documents will result in automatic disqualification. All applicants may be subject to further interviews and examinations(i.e. writing assignment) to determine qualification.**

Employment application may be accessed at www.cnmileg.gov.mp or may be picked up at the Office of the Director of the Legislative Bureau located at the Honorable Jesus P. Mafnas Memorial Building (CNMI Legislature), Capitol Hill, Saipan. Completed application and police clearance may be submitted to the Office of the Director or may be mailed to the Office of the Director; Legislative Bureau; P.O. Box 500586; Saipan, MP 96950. No telephone inquiries.

PLACE YOUR ADVERT HERE!
For opportunities contact us at 235-6397

Subscribe to the CNMI's First Daily Newspaper for more news, value and information.
SUBSCRIBING **MEANS MORE**
Please call 235-NEWS

WHATZIT Solution: Two left feet

RATES AND POLICIES

Saipan Tribune's Classifieds Section gives you the right exposure without hurting your pockets. Stretch your dollar and get results.

CLASSIFIED LINER ADS

Saipan Tribune also offers a complete 5-day run of liner ads, for as low as $15 for garage sales, apartment rentals, help wanted, auto and more. You can choose from any of the packages below.

ADS
- 3-Liner **$15**
- 5-Liner **$24**

ADVERTISING DEADLINE

Classified Ads

Ads must be submitted before 12 noon 2 days prior to publication date

CANCELLATION

Classified Ads

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

REFUNDS

Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

CHECK YOUR ADS

Saipan Tribune will not be responsible for errors after the first day of publication. Errors should be called in before noon of the issue date. *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

ADVERTISING POLICY

All advertising in the *Saipan Tribune* are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

WHATZIT?™
Find the familiar phrase, saying or name in this arrangement of letters.

feet
feat

WHATZIT? © 2019 www.whatzit.com Distributed by Andrews McMeel Syndication

www.facebook.com/dingbatsgames

Find today's solution in classified section

Eagles committed to Wentz; Foles left out

PHILADELPHIA—There certainly wasn't much of a surprise when Eagles coach Doug Pederson said right away Tuesday that "Carson (Wentz) is the quarterback going forward."

Pederson had been preaching that ever since Wentz was sidelined after the Dec. 9 game against the Dallas Cowboys and replaced by Nick Foles.

Foles, of course, was the Super Bowl hero last year who led the Eagles to four straight victories and a playoff berth this season before the Eagles were eliminated Sunday night in a 20-14 loss to the New Orleans Saints in the divisional round of the NFL playoffs.

But Pederson made it seem like Foles had thrown his last pass as an Eagle when he added: "In Nick's case, listen, we would love to have everybody back throughout the roster. But as I've said many, many times, it's not about one guy. It's about the team and we're going to do what's best for the team."

And herein lies the Eagles' offseason challenge going forward.

As proud as executive vice president for football operations Howie Roseman was at the Eagles' resolve to make the playoffs after a 4-6 start, the team has a veteran roster and is over the salary cap heading into next season. That means the Eagles are going to have to shed some contracts.

"It would have been very easy for us to say this is not our year, but our players rallied around each other, they rallied around the coaching staff," Roseman said. "We know we have a lot of work to do this offseason. We know we have to improve the roster. We're looking forward to that challenge and we're going to get to work on it right away."

To bring back Foles, the Eagles would have to pay him $20 million next season. And if Wentz is the starter, as Pederson said, that's cost prohibitive.

AP

In this Aug. 5, 2018, file photo, Philadelphia Eagles' Carson Wentz, right, talks to Nick Foles at the end of practice at NFL football training camp, in Philadelphia.

The Eagles also have to make decisions on whether to bring back potential free agents like defensive end Brandon Graham, linebacker Jordan Hicks, running back Jay Ajayi, wide receiver Golden Tate, in addition to high-priced veterans like left tackle Jason Peters, safety Rodney McLeod, and of course, Foles.

Roseman said that a team typically has "15 to 20 percent" roster turnover during an offseason. It could be higher for the Eagles, but Roseman is trying to avoid that.

"It's very important also that we keep our core together and that we maintain the culture that Coach Pederson and his staff have built," Roseman said. "And continue to keep leaders here to show our young players the right way to do things. This isn't a situation where we're just looking to have just a youth movement. We're looking to compete at a very high level next year and really hopefully be doing that for as long as we're standing up here."

That, of course, starts with the quarterback.

Wentz was a favorite for the MVP award when he tore two knee ligaments on Dec. 10, 2017, and missed the Super Bowl run.

Then Wentz suffered the back injury and missed the latest playoff run. Roseman wouldn't go into specifics about when Wentz originally suffered the injury, which was an issue as far back as mid-October. And that led to questions about the medical staff considering that the Eagles had about a dozen key players on injured reserve this season.

But Roseman did say he has "faith" in the medical staff.

Roseman was asked how can the Eagles be certain that Wentz will stay healthy enough to be the franchise quarterback?

"We have a lot of confidence in Carson's ability to be our quarterback and to be hopefully a 19-game starter in a season in what we're trying to do," Roseman said, referring to one that ends in the Super Bowl.

Panthers must have backup plan if Newton can't play

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (AP)—The Panthers are preparing for life without Cam Newton next season in case the team's franchise quarterback can't make it back from a lingering shoulder injury.

Panthers owner David Tepper said Tuesday that while the team is exhausting all options to make sure Newton's throwing shoulder gets the medical attention he needs this offseason, it is important to "keep their options open."

The hope, he said, is Newton will be healthy. However, it's been 2½ weeks since Carolina's season ended, and the team still doesn't know if the 2015 league MVP will need surgery.

The Panthers have never said what the injury is—and Newton doesn't know either.

"If you know what you might be facing next year, or not facing—hopefully Cam's shoulder is fantastic and we're hunky dory and we're all happy—(but) if it's not, you may need more cap space," Tepper said. "You need to be able to go out and find somebody. If you don't, (reporters) are going to be writing up what a dope we are here. Why didn't we make these other moves?"

Newton struggled most of the season throwing the ball more than 15 yards downfield because of a lingering shoulder issue, partially stemming from surgery to repair a partially torn rotator cuff in 2017. The Panthers eventually shut him down with two games remaining after being eliminated from playoff contention.

The 6-foot-5, 245-pound Newton was a mere shell of himself in the passing game the second half of last season as the Panthers finished 7-9 after starting the season 6-2.

Newton threw six interceptions and two touchdowns in his final three games.

"Of course it's a concern," Tepper said of Newton's shoulder. "... Cam Newton is the guy we are going to be depending on. He's a talent. But it would be foolish for anybody to say that you're not having an awareness of what could be and potential things that could happen through the year.

Saints need complete team effort vs Rams

The optimistic New Orleans Saints fan was hoping the extra rest would rejuvenate the NFC's No. 1 seed in the postseason.

As it turned out, way too many areas went a different direction from the 13-win regular season in Sunday's 20-14 heart-stopping victory over the Philadelphia Eagles.

The most obvious mainstays were the job the defense did over the final three quarters and the outstanding play of wide receiver Michael Thomas.

It's an approach that's carried the Saints to many of their 14 wins this season: The defense struggles in the first quarter and then dominates the final three.

Even in the dominating 51-14 win over Cincinnati, the Bengals rattled off 101 yards on 12 plays in their first two drives, before the defense shut them down the rest of the way.

On Sunday, the Eagles' offense got eight first downs and 151 total yards on its first two drives, but were limited to seven first downs and 99 yards over its final eight possessions.

It'll be scary to try that approach against the Rams and/or potentially either Super Bowl foe, but it's worked so far.

Thomas was spectacular again with 12 receptions for 171 yards and a score. That was his seventh game this season with 10 or more receptions.

In the bigger picture, another thing that didn't change Sunday was the Saints' playoff history with rematches.

When facing a team in the playoffs that the Saints beat in the regular season, New Orleans is now 4-1, with the only exception being the 2010 Seattle Seahawks. When facing a team in the playoffs that they lost to in the regular season, the Saints are 0-3.

Twice they faced teams who they split with in the regular season (the 2000 St. Louis Rams and 1991 Atlanta Falcons), and likewise, the Saints were 1-1 in those postseason matchups.

In other words, the playoff rematch usually mirrors the regular season result. Of course, New Orleans beat the Rams, 45-35, on Nov. 4.

Unfortunately, there was a long list of things that took different routes Sunday.

After ranging between solid to very good throughout the regular season, the special teams stunk, with the exception of Taysom Hill's critical fake punt conversion that gave the Saints some life.

Wil Lutz had an incredible regular season—making 28 of 30 attempts—and then made the first two field goals Sunday, but with a chance to put Philly away on the third one, he was wide right on a 52-yard attempt.

Even Thomas Morstead had a mediocre 39-yard punt.

The return teams ruined field position several times with costly penalties.

The Saints had 11 flags for 84 yards in the game after finishing with the 10th fewest penalties this season at 6.8.

The offensive line was reportedly healthy for the first time in over a month, but got manhandled for much of the game after dominating Philly in the first meeting.

Overall, there certainly wasn't much rhythm to the entire game. In 2009, the debate was rust vs. rest.

In the postgame speech to his team after destroying the Arizona Cardinals 45-14 that season, coach Sean Payton scoffed at the notion that his team would be rusty.

In this one against the Eagles, his team looked way more rusty than rested.

Saints' fans are hoping the rust has now been shaken off, and more of the regular-season greatness will show though in the NFC Championship Game against the Rams this Sunday.

Warriors use NBA-record 1st quarter to rout Nuggets

DENVER (AP)— Stephen Curry and Klay Thompson each scored 31 points as the Golden State Warriors, propelled by an NBA-record, 51-point first quarter, regained the top spot in the Western Conference by routing the Denver Nuggets 142-111 on Tuesday night.

Golden State cruised to a fifth straight win to move a half-game in front of the Nuggets, who had their 12-game home winning streak snapped.

The showdown between the top two teams in the conference proved a little too big for the Nuggets, with Curry and Company putting on a shooting exhibition all night long. The clinic began early with the Warriors erupting for 51 points in the opening quarter, breaking the old mark of 50 held by several teams. The last time it happened was also against Denver when Phoenix scored 50 on Nov. 10, 1990.

Golden State shot a blistering 60 percent from the field, had 38 assists and hit 21 3-pointers in leading wire-to-wire. Kevin Durant finished with 27 points and Draymond Green was a plus-41 as he had 13 assists to go with four points.

Malik Beasley finished with 22 points for the Nuggets. Big man Nikola Jokic struggled with early foul trouble, finishing with 17 points and eight assists in 23 minutes.

Denver knocked off Golden State 100-98 in Denver on Oct. 21 thanks to Juancho Hernangomez blocking a layup at the buzzer. This version of the matchup was never close.

And this demonstrates just how dominant the Warriors were in the opening half: Denver scored 60, shooting 49 percent from the floor, and still trailed by 19 at the break.

In pregame, the Nuggets deflected the notion this was a big game, but did acknowledge it was an important gauge.

"You always want to measure yourself against the best, let's be honest," Denver coach Michael Malone said. "That allows you to truly see where you're at and how much farther you have to go."

AP

Denver Nuggets guard Monte Morris, right, drives past Golden State Warriors guard Stephen Curry in the second half of an NBA basketball game, Tuesday, Jan. 15, 2019, in Denver. The Warriors won, 142-111.

76ers 149, Timberwolves 107

In Philadelphia, Joel Embiid had 31 points and 13 rebounds, and the 76ers scored 83 points in the first half in a thrashing of the Minnesota Timberwolves in Jimmy Butler's first game against his former team.

The Golden State Warriors were the only team to score more first-half points in a game this season when they dropped 92 on the Chicago Bulls on Oct. 29. The Sixers hit a team-record 21 3-pointers and reached their highest point total in the 22-year history of the Wells Fargo Center.

Butler scored 19 points in the first meeting with Minnesota since it sent him to the 76ers in a package deal that brought forwards Robert Covington and Dario Saric in return.

Hawks 142, Thunder 126

In Atlanta, Trae Young had 24 points and 11 assists to win the showdown of past and former Atlanta point guards, leading the Hawks over Oklahoma City.

Former Hawks point guard Dennis Schroder scored 21 points in his return to Atlanta. Schroder struggled early but had 14 points in the third period when the Thunder outscored the Hawks 41-27 to reclaim the lead.

Atlanta was similarly dominant in the second period, outscoring Oklahoma City 45-30 to match its high mark for any quarter this season. After holding a big lead of 15 points, the last time at 70-55, the Hawks led 70-59 at halftime.

John Collins made 12 of 14 shots from the field and led Atlanta with 26 points. Alex Len had 24 points and 11 rebounds. The Hawks were 18 of 37 on 3-pointers.

Russell Westbrook led the Thunder with 31 points and 11 assists. Paul George had 24 points and Jerami Grant added 21.

Bucks 124, Heat 86

In Milwaukee, Giannis Antetokounmpo had 12 points, 10 rebounds and 10 assists in his fourth triple-double of the season, and Milwaukee cruised past Miami.

Eric Bledsoe had 17 points and Malcolm Brogdon added 16 for Milwaukee, which has won 13 of 16 dating to Dec. 14. The Bucks improved to 31-12, second-best in the NBA.

Justise Winslow and Hassan Whiteside had 19 points apiece for Miami, which fell to 21-21.

Pacers 131, Suns 97

In Indianapolis, Bojan Bogdanovic scored 20 points in Indiana's easy victory over Phoenix.

Myles Turner returned for the first time in four games to finish with 18 points and six rebounds. Turner was nursing a sore right shoulder over the last week.

Indiana got off to a hot start thanks to Bogdanovic, who scored the Pacers' first 10 points. The Pacers doubled the Suns' total in the first quarter, leading 38-19 at the end of the period.

Indiana limited Devin Booker to eight points in 26 minutes.

Lakers 107, Bulls 100

In Los Angeles, Lonzo Ball scored 19 points, Kentavious Caldwell-Pope added 17 and the Lakers won for just the fourth time since LeBron James' groin injury, beating the reeling Chicago Bulls.

Ball, who also had eight rebounds and six assists, scored 13 points during the second half as Los Angeles was able to break open what was a close game for the first 28 minutes. Brandon Ingram and Kyle Kuzma scored 16 apiece.

Australia barely beats Syria, makes knockout stage

AL AIN, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Australia is through to the knockout rounds at the Asian Cup, although the defending champion hasn't made it look pretty.

Australia needed a stoppage-time goal from Tom Rogic to beat Syria 3-2 on Tuesday after twice letting leads slip. A draw would have been enough to finish runner-up in Group B behind Jordan —which beat Australia 1-0 in their opening game— and the title holder was below its best in eliminating a resolute Syrian team, which finished last in the group.

Palestine's 0-0 draw with Jordan in Abu Dhabi means it can still reach the round of 16 as one of the four best third-place teams in the new 24-team format.

The Palestinians have two points and will go through if enough low-ranked teams in other groups draw their games on Wednesday and Thursday.

Australia will play the Group F runner-up—2011 champion Japan or Uzbekistan — next Monday in the first knockout round.

If Australia's overall play was unconvincing for a team which tested eventual champion France in a 2018 World Cup group game, two of its goals were impressive.

Awer Mabil opened the scoring in the 41st minute with a curling left-foot shot from just outside the penalty area. Rogic decided the game with a powerful left-foot shot from the same distance.

In between, Chris Ikonomidi's poked shot past Syrian goalkeeper Ibrahim Alma was judged to have crossed the line before Omro Al Midani's attempted clearance. Without goal-line technology, or video review before the quarterfinal stage, the assistant at the touchline and fifth official beside the goal helped make the decision.

Syria first leveled though Omar Khrbin in the 43rd, and then Omar Al Soma's 80th-minute penalty kick after he fell to the ground as a cross was swung in from the right flank.

Jordan tops the group with seven points, and next plays a third-place team— Bahrain, Vietnam or Yemen

Youngsters upset foes in Australian Open

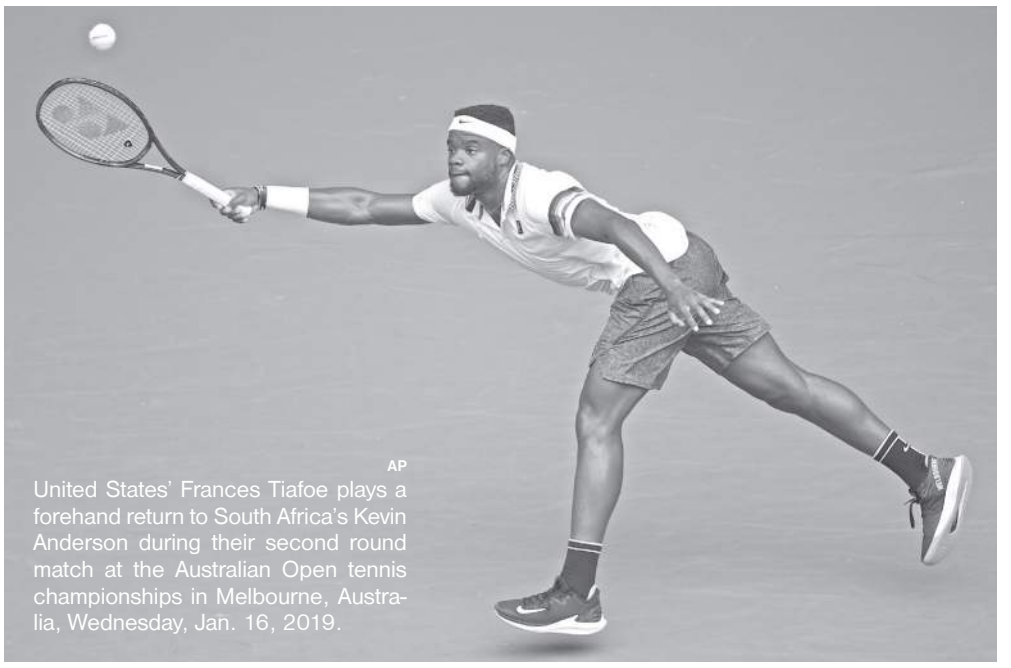
MELBOURNE, Australia (AP)— Frances Tiafoe rolled up his white shirt's right sleeve, flexed his biceps and slapped the muscle five times. Then he pounded his chest and yelled, "Yeah! Let's go! Let's go! Come on!"

Forgive the young American's exuberance. This was, after all, the biggest victory of his nascent career.

Down a set and 3-0 in the second, the 20-year-old Tiafoe came back to stun two-time Grand Slam finalist and No. 5 seed Kevin Anderson of South Africa 4-6, 6-4, 6-4, 7-5 on Wednesday in the Australian Open's second round.

"I went to a different place. I dug insanely deep," the 39th-ranked Tiafoe said. "It's all about competing. Guys are so good. It's just about how badly you want it. I want it real bad."

He was joined in the third round by another kid from the U.S. who'd never been that far at Melbourne Park, 21-year-old Taylor Fritz, who saved 12 of the 13 break points he faced while dispatching No. 30 seed Gael Monfils of France 6-3, 6-7 (8), 7-6 (6), 7-6 (5).



AP

United States' Frances Tiafoe plays a forehand return to South Africa's Kevin Anderson during their second round match at the Australian Open tennis championships in Melbourne, Australia, Wednesday, Jan. 16, 2019.

Next for Fritz is a matchup against Roger Federer, the two-time defending champion in Australia and owner of 20 Grand Slam titles.

"I grew up watching a lot of the guys I play today. I can't tell you how many times I watched Monfils' highlight reel on YouTube, just growing up. 'Fed,' obviously, my whole life growing up, he was always the best, winning everything," Fritz said. "So it's really cool being able to step on the court with him again."

A day after American men went 1-5, the country's contingent produced those two upsets and threw a couple of scares into other seeded players, too, but couldn't pull off the wins.

Mackenzie McDonald pushed No. 6 Marin Cilic before losing 7-5, 6-7 (9), 6-4, 6-4, and Denis Kudla went to a fifth set before bowing out 6-4, 7-5, 3-6, 6-7 (6), 6-4 against No. 18 Diego Schwartzman.

"This group (of Americans) really deserves the hype, I guess, because I think everyone's good," Fritz said.

Cilic was the 2014 U.S. Open champion and the runner-up at Melbourne Park to Federer last year. Against McDonald, an NCAA champion in singles and doubles at UCLA who is 23 years old and ranked 81st, Cilic delivered 25 aces, including on each of the last two points.

"It was a much tougher match than I expected," Cilic said. "I didn't know much about him."

For Tiafoe, it helped that Anderson's best attribute, his intimidating serve, slowed down along the way because of problems with his right arm. Anderson was repeatedly visited by a trainer during changeovers and he lost about 5 mph (10 kph) on his first serves as the match wore on.

Dozier signs with Nationals, hopes to make postseason run

WASHINGTON (AP)— Brian Dozier turned down a more lucrative deal to join what he hopes is a playoff team with the Nationals.

The 31-year-old signed a $9 million, one-year contract with Washington that makes him the new second baseman and potentially a bridge from Daniel Murphy to prospect Carter Kieboom. Dozier said Tuesday other clubs offered him more money and longer deals, but he and his wife opted for the opportunity to win now.

"We're not the ones to go with the highest bidder by any means or any of that kind of stuff," Dozier said on a conference call. "With more years and dollars out there, we felt like this one-year deal with the Nats would be the best fit for us."

Dozier's contract includes $2 million deferred without interest until Jan. 15, 2020. Next winter could bring an even bigger windfall if he's able to get his swing back on track.

Last season, Dozier battled a bone bruise in his left knee and hit a career-low .215 with 21 homers with the Minnesota Twins and Los Angeles Dodgers. He averaged 35 homers over the preceding three seasons, with a career best of 42 for Minnesota in 2016, and is a career .246 hitter.

Washington could be counting on Dozier to supply some of that power in the middle of the lineup if star outfielder Bryce Harper signs elsewhere. Dozier can't control that, but he said his struggles in 2018 serve as motivation to bounce back.

"Going into this year personally you kind of have a chip on your shoulder just because you want to make sure you prove people wrong," Dozier said. "I felt like I've done that throughout my career. I had to do that, which is perfectly fine with me because I enjoy that."

Asked if a one-year deal was preferable for him to reset his value for another crack at free agency, Dozier said, "Resetting yourself for next year and all that kind of stuff, that all takes care of itself."

Dozier believes joining Washington puts him in the best frame of mind to take care of all that. With just 27 postseason plate appearances, he said signing on to a perennial playoff contender was a top priority, especially because the Nationals have been aggressive in adding left-handed starter Patrick Corbin, catchers Yan Gomes and Kurt Suzuki and reliever Trevor Rosenthal this offseason.

"You feed off that, and it brings out the best in yourself," Dozier said. "That's exactly how it is and helped make my decision a lot easier."

GCA

From Page 28

during practices, our coach's constant push for us to play and think like champions, and our faith and trust in God. I attribute our success to God, our coaches, teammates, families, friends, and all our supporters who encouraged us at each game and throughout all three winning seasons."

Before outlasting Agape 1, Saures and company were caught off guard in the opening set, as the Torchbearers leaped out of the gates to take a 8-2 lead against the defending champs. Agape captain David Zheng connected on three of his service attempts, while the rest of his team clamped down on defense to move in front early. With the Eagles' reeling as a result of being left in the dust in the opening minutes of the game, coach Cesar Libut sued for time, which eventually threw Agape off its groove.

After the timeout, Hye Jin Elliott was put in prime position to fire off three consecutive serves and get GCA back in the game. Elliott scored four consecutive points off her serves near the end of the set and was also able to power multiple spikes through the Torchbearer's airtight defense, allowing the Eagles to steal the opener. Elliott's efforts did not go in vain, as she was handed the highly coveted Finals MVP award.

"My hard work paid off and I felt proud. It felt good to have won the Finals MVP award and it drives me to improve even more," Elliott said.

Elliott also made special mention of their team's season-long efforts.

"Our team has become very close and we are very proud of this win. It was a close match and its feels awesome to win," she said.

As for Agape, the determined Torchbearers didn't allow the first set loss to prevent them from executing their game plan. Bobby Bao, Agape's all-around player, scored from multiple positions on the court, as his serves, spikes, and sets successfully found their marks. Zheng's strong play in the first set also continued in the second set and his partnership with Bao did wonders for Agape. With Agape ahead, 22-18, GCA whistled in for a timeout, but the lull this time failed to extinguish the Torchbearer's burning desire to stay in contention, as they rolled out a 25-22 victory.

After valiantly battling the Eagles in the second set, the Kok and En Yang Pang-coached Agape ultimately ceded the title to GCA. Despite the loss, the Torchbearers still held their heads high, as they were able to play in the middle school finals for the first time since the school was founded 25 years ago.

"It was such a good season. It's time to build again," Kok Pang said.

Meanwhile, the third place game also went the distance with GCA 2 beating MCS, 25-21, 17-25, 15-10.

GCA 2's Vicky Wang fired up from the server's spot at the perfect time, as she rattled home the final six serves to ice the game. Wang's scoring outburst broke the 7-7 deadlock and provided GCA the lift it needed to secure the third place trophy.

"I was so nervous but I realized that I should do this for the people I love, and I felt that I could do it," Wang said. "I was proud because I helped my teammates."

NMIFA

From Page 28

travel with a big team of referees and we had the chance to work and interact with our Guam counterparts and learn from experienced, top level referees and a former World Cup referee (Yamagichi). Our referee selection consisted of individuals at different experience levels, young and old, male and female. This provided for a great learning environment and the diversity shows that just about anyone can be a referee," the NMIFA official said.

The CNMI had five U18 referees attending the course—Merrick Toves, Katherine Magat, Floyd Muna, Taga Borja, and Sebastien Manabat. Joining them were adult referees Jeralyn Castillo, Davy Laxa, Mia Carreon, Don Cabrera, and Villaflor.

"The participants did great during the course and the instructors loved them. The instructors weren't impressed at the beginning of the course, but later they praised the group and were amazed about their progression and improvement in such a short period of time," Zapanta said.

All the participants received certificate of attendance after the course, but more than the acknowledgement, Zapanta, who is among the few veteran referees in the CNMI, is looking forward to seeing them practice what they learned in actual games.

"The referee course served as an eye opener for the nine participants and has brought up their interest to officiate more matches at higher levels and improve their individual referee skills and knowledge. I hope to see them busy on the field not just as players, but also as officials. There is a lot of potential for them to grow and possibly be our top international referees," the NMIFA official said.

Zapanta added that by exposing CNMI players and officials to courses like the one in Guam, more people would be enticed to join the pool. NMIFA has limited referees and umpires for competitive games and utilizes players in older age groups or in adult leagues in officiating matches in other tournaments.

"It is one of our challenging areas and I hope this will bring some awareness to our program. Referee development and recruiting has always been a challenge for myself and the NMIFA. Officiating a match isn't the most popular thing to do, but it has been rewarding for me and I hope to share similar opportunities to other individuals who choose to take on the challenge," Zapanta said.

"The nine referees enjoyed the course and I hope they can serve as our ambassadors to grow our pool of referees and show other individuals that refereeing is worth a try."

EAGLES

From Page 28

tency were literally on display this game," Pajarillaga said. "He pulled through with sharpened instincts and a raw determination to score."

Balakrishna played an especially integral role in GCA's win in the first set, as he rattled off multiple spikes and scored the last three serves in that period to lead his team to a 25-15 victory. Sam Ryu, on the other hand, thwarted ACS defense with multiple serves of his own, including two aces that threaded through the Torchbearers defense.

After the first set defeat, the Torchbearers claimed the second behind their towering frontline defense and better team communication. Agape started the second set facing a 6-9 deficit, but Silas Xu strung together five consecutive serves to overtake the Eagles. Agape went on to keep the driver's seat to extend the game, as Kobe Yang also did his part by scoring spikes, tips, and the game-winning serve to stymy GCA's comeback bid.

Despite the come-from-behind win in the second set, Agape ultimately fell short, as the Eagles stormed out of the gates in the decider to secure the victory.

Agape Christian School vs Grace Christian Academy

PHOTOS By ROBY N. PAMINTUAN

Grace Christian Academy's Karina Dilse, right, hits the ball after being set up by her teammate during their girls high school division game against Agape Christian School in the 2018-2019 Commonwealth Coalition of Private Schools Association Volleyball League last Tuesday at the Agape court in Gualo Rai.

An Agape Christian School player bends down to receive a serve from Grace Christian Academy.

Grace Christian Academy's Anna Nunez serves.

An Agape Christian School player tries to keep her balance while returning the ball.

Agape Christian School players huddle during a timeout.

Grace Christian Academy's Clerisse Dacumos lets go of an underhand serve.

An Agape Christian School serves.

Grace Christian Academy's Jasmine Phan spikes the ball.

Eagles committed to Wentz: Foles left out

PAGE 24

Saipan Tribune
Sports

Warriors use NBA-record 1st quarter to rout Nuggets

PAGE 25

GCA completes 3-peat

By ROBY N. PAMINTUAN
pamintuanroby@gmail.com
CORRESPONDENT

Grace Christian Academy 1 survived the resilient Agape Christian School 1 in the thrilling finale of the middle school division of the 2018-2019 Commonwealth Coalition of Private Schools Association Volleyball League en route to earning a three-peat in the competition.

The Eagles and Torchbearers wrestled back and forth throughout the threes sets, but GCA hung tough in the end to pull off a 25-19, 22-25, 15-9 win last Tuesday at the Saipan International School court. With the finals victory over Agape 1, the Eagles soared to new heights as they did not only rule the division for three straight seasons, but also kept their unblemished record.

ROBY N. PAMINTUAN
Grace Christian Academy 1's Katriel Saures hits the ball during their middle school title game against Agape Christian School 1 in the CCOPSA volleyball league last Tuesday at the Saipan International School court in As Lito.

Team captain Katriel Saures delivered the title-sealing serve in the third set and after showcasing both her individual and team skills all throughout the season, she was rewarded with the prestigious MVP award.

"I have to admit that I am happy to have received such a prestigious award, especially being surrounded by strong teammates and players from other teams," Saures said.

When asked about the main keys behind GCA's undefeated mark, Saures responded with joy and humility. "The main factors included lots of training and skill sharpening

See GCA on Page 26

ROBY N. PAMINTUAN
Grace Christian Academy's Steven Balakrishna, right, tips the ball against two Agape Christian School defenders during their boys high school division game at the latter's court in Gualo Rai.

Eagles deliver in high school volleyball

By ROBY N. PAMINTUAN
pamintuanroby@gmail.com
CORRESPONDENT

Grace Christian Academy went the distance against Agape Christian School before taking a victory in the boys high school division game in the 2018-2019 Commonwealth Coalition of Private Schools Association Volleyball League last Monday at the Torchbearers' court in Middle Road.

GCA and ACS played their first match in 2019 with the Eagles securing a 25-15, 22-25, 15-5 win.

With the game on the line in the third set, Wilgene Lieto and Joshua Pajarillaga stood out for GCA from the serving line. Lieto converted his first six serves into points and Pajarillaga peppered the opposition with nine consecutive serves.

"I knew that missing a serve here in the third set would've set my team behind both in points and morale," Pajarillaga, the team captain, said. "I put everything I could into those serves, so seeing everything work out felt amazing."

While Lieto and Pajarillaga were solid with their serves in the final set, their teammates—setter William Kim and spiker Steven Balakrishna—worked together for powerhouse spikes on a consistent basis.

"Steven Balakrishna's strength, speed, and consis-

See EAGLES on Page 26

NMIFA aims to grow referees pool

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

After sending a big group to the East Asian Football Federation Referee Development Course in Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands Football Association is eyeing to increase its referees pool.

NMIFA executive director Ruselle Zapanta was one of the 11 Saipan representatives to the four-day, off-island course last week and brought back with him training materials from five-time AFC Referee of the Year Sachiko Yamagishi and J2 League's Tadashi Hase.

"As one of the NMIFA instructors (the other one was Cristy Villaflor) I have to give back to our referees in the NMI and conduct local courses so I was able to obtain training materials shared by our instructors. I hope that we can increase our pool of referees in the NMI and soon we can have individuals represent us internationally at the top level," said Zapanta, who assisted the two Japanese in holding the course that was also attended by more than 20 individuals from Guam.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
CNMI referees pose with five-time AFC Referee of the Year Sachiko Yamagishi, sixth left, back row, and J2 League's Tadashi Hase, second left, back row, after attending the East Asian Football Federation Referee Development Course in Guam last week.

"The course was special because I had the opportunity to

See NMIFA on Page 26